



Excellence in Recovery Housing Act

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The Problem

Over 20 million Americans identify as being in recovery from a substance use disorder (SUD).ⁱ For many individuals, recovery housing or “sober homes” is a critical component of their recovery. Recovery residences provide a family-like communal living experience in which individuals agree to abstain from substance use (aside from prescribed medications) and provide each other support. Recovery residences vary in how they are managed, from peer-run to licensed facilities with staff and clinical services, but they share the goal of providing a safe and stable environment for individuals who often face challenges finding other housing due to a lack of steady income or involvement with the criminal justice system.

Individuals with a SUD who live in recovery housing are more likely to maintain recovery, have higher rates of employment, and are less likely to become incarcerated.ⁱⁱ While a comprehensive study has not been conducted to determine the exact amount of recovery housing available and the demand,ⁱⁱⁱ smaller studies and anecdotal reports indicate that there are not currently enough beds in recovery housing for everyone who wants one.^{iv} Additionally, not all states regulate recovery housing or require accreditation, and the quality varies.^v

The Solution

The *Excellence in Recovery Housing Act* would improve understanding of the quality, effectiveness, and availability of recovery housing; coordinate the government’s efforts; and promote the adoption of best practices for operating recovery housing. The SUPPORT Act required SAMHSA to publish best practices for recovery housing,^{vi} but these are not focused on practical operations. Recovery residences, particularly those that are peer-run instead of staff-led, would benefit from standardized recommendations to ensure that housing is high-quality and meets residents’ needs.

What does the *Excellence in Recovery Housing Act* do?

This legislation would require SAMHSA, along with national accrediting entities and reputable providers of recovery housing services, to develop guidelines for states to promote the availability of high-quality recovery housing. It would also provide grants to states to implement these guidelines and promote high-quality housing. In order to better understand the current availability, quality, and effectiveness of recovery housing, the bill would require the National Academy of Sciences to study the issue, as well as make recommendations for increasing availability, improving data collection, and improving inclusivity for individuals who take medication-assisted treatment. Finally, it would create an interagency working group, chaired by SAMHSA and HUD, to increase collaboration among federal agencies in promoting the availability of high-quality recovery housing.



Support for the Excellence in Recovery Housing Act

Addiction Policy Forum; Alcohol and Drug Abuse Certification Board of Georgia; The Alliance for Strong Families and Communities and the Council on Accreditation; American Osteopathic Academy of Addiction Medicine; American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM); Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness; California Consortium of Addiction Programs & Professionals; Collaborative for Effective Prescription Opioid Policies (CEPOP); Community Anti- Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA); Faces & Voices of Recovery; The Kennedy Forum; Live4Lali; Mothers Against Prescription Drug Abuse (MAPDA); NAADAC, the Association for Addiction Professionals; National Alliance for Medication Assisted Recovery (NAMA Recovery); National Alliance for Recovery Residences (NARR); National Association for Behavioral Healthcare; National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists; National Council for Behavioral Health; Partnership to End Addiction; Shatterproof; SMART Recovery; Talbott Legacy Centers; Treatment Communities of America; The Voices Project; Well Being Trust; WestCare Foundation

ⁱ <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/cbhsq-reports/NSDUHNationalFindingsReport2018/NSDUHNationalFindingsReport2018.pdf>

ⁱⁱ https://www.thenationalcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Recovery-Housing-Issue-Brief_May-2017.pdf?dof=375ateTbd56

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.gao.gov/assets/700/690831.pdf>

^{iv} https://www.interactforhealth.org/upl/media/recovery_housing_in_greater_cincinnati.pdf

^v <https://www.npr.org/2021/02/15/963700736/as-addiction-deaths-surge-profit-driven-rehab-industry-faces-severe-ethical-cris>

^{vi} <https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/housing-best-practices-100819.pdf>