



Recovery Partners of Vermont

Recovery Partners of Vermont (RPV) and the Vermont Alliance for Recovery Residences (VTARR) seek a legislative solution to Vermont's landlord-tenant law that provides for the safety and successful recovery of all residents in Vermont's certified Recovery Residences.

VTARR, RPV and stakeholders seek clarity regarding the classification of recovery residences under Vermont's landlord-tenant law, and how to effectively ensure the safety of all residents when an individual relapses or engages in behaviors that jeopardize the recovery and well-being of others in the residence.

VTARR and RPV fully understand the need to have a safe place for individuals to go if they relapse. **Vermont's recovery residences do not provide clinical treatment services, and any individual who relapses needs a safe space with treatment services.** We see the lack of stabilization beds across Vermont as a direct barrier to action for establishing a legislative solution to Vermont's landlord-tenant law that provides for the safety and successful recovery of all residents among Vermont's certified homes. Stabilization beds are the appropriate resource to serve as a safety net for those who have no other option, and we fully support more stabilization beds in Vermont. At the same time, we cannot wait for the reality of more stabilization beds to keep our current residents safe.

The current application of Vermont's landlord-tenant law to recovery residences is a direct barrier to scaling residences in Vermont. Currently, certified homes are running at less than 5% open beds, resulting in long waitlists that jeopardize the successful recovery of those seeking sober living situations. There is also a need to expand in terms of our geographic distribution throughout the state so residents can be closer to their communities.

Vermont needs more recovery residences, and both existing and potential operators cite challenges with Vermont's landlord-tenant law as a primary reason why they are not pursuing new residences in Vermont. VTARR currently has 13 certified locations with another 3 coming on board in 2024. For comparison, the VTARR's New Hampshire counterpart has 94 certified locations.

Follow the Maine approach

One solution that is favorable among all VTARR and RPV members is to follow the Maine approach. Maine recently passed legislation, [LD597](#), which allows recovery residences to remove an individual if that residence has a discharge policy in place. The law states:

A certified recovery residence must have a written discharge and transfer policy that is approved by a credentialing entity that is recognized by the department. Notwithstanding any landlord and tenant rights and obligations under Title 14, chapter 709, a certified recovery residence with a discharge and transfer policy approved under this section may immediately discharge or transfer a resident in accordance with that policy if the discharge or transfer is necessary for the resident's welfare, the resident's needs cannot be met at the recovery residence or the health and safety of other residents or recovery residence employees are at risk or would be at risk if the resident continues to live at the recovery residence. A person who refuses to leave a recovery residence after a discharge or transfer that is consistent with the requirements of this section may be ordered to leave the premises by the recovery residence owner or operator or by a law enforcement officer.

VTARR and RPV would like to see Vermont adopt similar legislation. VTARR is a credentialing entity recognized by the Department of Health's Division of Substance Use Programs and currently has the capacity to work with Vermont's 16 certified homes to develop discharge policies that align with VTARR and the National Alliance for Recovery Residences (NARR) evidence-based standards which already include best practices established by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). VTARR is happy to work with the VT Department of Health on required elements for approval of discharge policies.

It is important to note that Maine passed this legislation *before* their residences had discharge policies in place, and as a result of the legislation, residences were able to establish discharge policies that aligned with the legislation. Vermont's 16 certified homes stand ready to do the same.

Scalability

The Vermont Foundation of Recovery (VFOR) has set the goal of having a recovery residence in each community where there is a recovery center across Vermont. Under the alliance of RPV, VFOR would work closely with Vermont's recovery centers to make these new residences available for the populations that each community has identified the greatest need for (i.e. men, women, parents with children, LGBTQ+, etc.).

With proper funding and policy protections regarding the safety of all residents, VFOR could bring an estimated 16 new homes online, beyond what is currently in the pipeline. Prospective places to locate new recovery residences include Newport, Randolph, Middlebury, and Brattleboro, among others. Additionally, VTARR anticipates an additional 8-10 residences coming on board pending changes to Vermont's landlord-tenant law. This includes a residence that closed as a direct result of challenges with the landlord-tenant law coming back online. With VFOR and VTARR's plans for expansions combined, we anticipate doubling our current capacity of certified homes.

It is important to note that our ability to scale directly hinges on changes to Vermont's landlord-tenant law *and* on financial assistance from the state. Vermont's Recovery Residences have calculated an average funding gap and need for state support of \$190,000 per certified home. For any new residence coming online, we would be requesting a state appropriation of **\$190,000 (plus inflation in future fiscal years) per certified home**. For the fiscal year 2025 state budget, RPV and VTARR are requesting an additional \$1,559,000 – \$1,884,000 to support Vermont's 16 certified homes. From FY26-FY29, the General Assembly can expect to see a request for increased base funding for new certified homes between \$380,000 - \$570,000 per fiscal year. Please [click here](#) to learn more about RPV's funding requests for the FY25 state budget.

We are also interested in learning more about the potential to change the current application of Vermont's landlord-tenant law to recovery residences through rule making in partnership with the Administration, if this is an available option.

Questions and comments can be directed to Jeffrey Moreau, ED of Vermont Alliance for Recovery Residences
Email: info@vtarr.org | Website: <http://www.vtarr.org/>