

Recovery Center FY27 Budget Needs

Recovery organizations (centers) are local, self-directed, and inclusive organizations that provide a dynamic set of peer-led services and support for helping people realize the power they have to break free from their addiction.

- ★ Recovery looks different for every individual, and recovery organizations work with every individual to get them the support they need at the time they need it, *offering healing and hope that lasts a lifetime.*

Vermont's local recovery organizations are asking the Legislature to please support the following appropriations for fiscal year 2027:

1. **Please level fund \$800,000 in Prevention Funds**, with language specifying how funds shall be allocated
2. **Please support the Vermont Department of Health's recommendation to appropriate \$1,250,000 in FY27 Opioid Abatement Funds** to continue the successful peer recovery coaching program within our correctional facilities. This is a joint request from Recovery Partners of Vermont and the VT Department of Corrections.

The Need: Recovery organizations have seen a significant increase in demand for our services, and we expect this trend to continue as federal actions make it harder for individuals who are struggling with substance use to access resources and services. Recovery organizations are also seeing an increase in the number of visitors who are accessing recovery spaces for more general support as other community partners and local agencies downsize or close. In particular, we have seen an increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness who access our space. We do everything we can to support any individual who comes through our doors.

Recovery organizations provide more than recovery services only:

- ★ **Concrete supports for people experiencing homelessness:** Recovery centers collect and distribute warm clothes, blankets, and other winter gear for people experiencing homelessness.

- ★ **Meals / Food Distribution:** Many centers offer meals in coordination with local partners. I.e. The Turning Point Center of Rutland is a member of the Vermont Foodbank's local network and serves 100-150 people per week.

- ★ **LGBTQ+, Parent, and Other Support Groups:** Many recovery centers host support groups for individuals with substance use issues who are members of the LGBTQ+ community, adolescents and teens, parents with small children, and other designated groups.

- ★ **Free Community Space:** Recovery centers are free, safe, warm, public spaces for anyone who needs them. Any individual can come in and utilize the space, which can mean anything from just staying warm and dry for the day, to playing games and socializing, to using our phones and computers to access other services

State investment in recovery organizations is an upstream investment in prevention with long-term cost savings.

Questions and comments can be directed to RPV Executive Director, **Suzie Walker**

Email: suzie@vtrecoverynetwork.org | Phone: (802) 579-4560 | www.vtrecoverynetwork.org

Opioid Abatement Funds – Recovery Coaching Program

Recovery Partners of Vermont (RPV) is proud to partner with the Vermont Agency of Human Services and Department of Corrections to request \$1,250,000 in FY27 Opioid Settlement Funds to continue the successful peer recovery coaching program within our correctional facilities.

- ★ This funding supports peer “Recovery Coaches” embedded at recovery organizations across the state, fostering continuity of care where individuals are able to access recovery services across institutional and jurisdictional boundaries.
- ★ Recovery Coaches are people who have experienced addiction, and often incarceration, themselves. They help individuals who are incarcerated form a recovery plan that addresses immediate, short-term, and long-term recovery needs once they are released, tailored, as need be, to suit their conditions of release.

The Need: Overdose is the leading cause of death for people recently released from incarceration nationwide.

The immediate period following release from incarceration poses particular risk for overdose death. This program helps to keep people in recovery following release by establishing a relationship with their local recovery organization while they are incarcerated and meeting them with direct services immediately following their release.

- The Turning Points are uniquely suited to provide this service given our longstanding referral relationship with local police and correctional officers.

Recovery Coaching Participation

| DOC Grant Agreement | Unique Individuals Served |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| Correctional Facilities | 1,348 (FY25 complete) |
| Probation & Parole | 717 (FY26, Q1-3) |

Grant agreements with the VT Department of Corrections have allowed RPV member organizations to serve individuals in **all correctional facilities** in Vermont.

- The Turning Point Center of Rutland piloted this program at the Marble Valley Correctional Center in 2016.
 - You can see granular data from the Rutland program from its inception in 2016 to January, 2025 by [clicking here](#).
 - Read testimonials from Rutland program participants [here](#).

Why this Funding Matters: The VT Department of Corrections had previously received a Bernie Sanders earmark to fund this program, but **those federal funds have been eliminated**. At the same time, the need is greater than ever. This program has proven to be successful, but without special funds to backfill the elimination of federal funds, the program could go away.

This funding will allow recovery organizations and the Vermont Department of Corrections to continue this work together, ensuring that individuals who face the commonly co-occurring challenges of addiction and incarceration have the greatest chance possible for success. **This program is prevention** – every successful recovery story translates to one less overdose, especially when it comes to individuals being released from correctional facilities.