



# IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & WELFARE

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## Division of Behavioral Health

### **Safe and Sober Recovery Residences**

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#### **INTRODUCTION**

An important component of a comprehensive Recovery- Oriented System of Care is providing a dignified, safe recovery environment where people in early recovery, as well as those who have a history of recovery, are given the time needed to rebuild their lives. Since the 1970's, groups have established 'recovery housing' to provide people in recovery a safe and sober place to live while they transition back into the community. Recovery housing, recovery residences, recovery homes and sober living homes all refer to a range of alcohol- and drug-free housing models that create mutually supportive communities where individuals improve their physical, mental, spiritual and social well-being and gain skills and resources to sustain their recovery. Individuals utilizing recovery residences are in a transition period of their lives and these recovery residences offer the stability and support needed during this period to lead a successful long-term recovery lifestyle.

#### **Recovery Residences in Idaho**

There are a range of housing programs in Idaho that offer people in recovery a safe place to live as they work toward their recovery goals. The guidelines in this standard are intended for the two types of safe and sober housing supported by the Idaho Behavioral Health Authority: staffed safe and sober housing and enhanced staffed safe and sober housing.

Staffed safe and sober housing is the traditional type of recovery residence that provides a safe, clean and sober environment for adults with substance use disorders who are transitioning back into the community. Enhanced staffed safe and sober housing is focused on serving those individuals with a co-occurring mental health and substance use disorder who are transitioning out of one of the state psychiatric hospitals or a community hospital. This type of housing

provides additional care to individuals needing a greater level of support than what is offered in traditional safe and sober housing.

Both types of housing programs encourage recovery from alcohol and other drugs by providing a peer-to-peer recovery support system with staff to oversee the facilities and encourage the recovery process. Length of stay will vary depending on the participants, needs, progress, and willingness to abide by residence guidelines and payment arrangements. While a participant resides in the recovery residence, they build a network of recovery resources that will continue to support the individual's recovery as they transition to living independently and productively in the community.

To be eligible for either housing program, an individual must meet the eligibility requirements for substance use disorder services established in Idaho law.

To be eligible for Enhanced Staffed Safe and Sober Housing, an individual must meet the following criteria in addition to the above substance use disorder eligibility requirements:

- Are experiencing or are at risk of experiencing homelessness, and have a co-occurring disorder.
- Not eligible for other state or federal funding for housing services, including discretionary grants funding offered through the Division of Behavioral Health and funding provided by other state agencies.
- Priority will be given to the following:
  - Individuals discharged from any State Psychiatric Hospital
  - Individuals referred for services from any Division of Behavioral Health staff member.

## **Guiding Principles**

Staffed Safe and Sober Housing and Enhanced Staffed Safe and Sober Housing are guided by the ten (10) principles as identified by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Best practices in the following areas support the principles of recovery housing:

1. Have a clear operational definition
2. Recognize that a substance use disorder is a chronic condition requiring a range of recovery supports
3. Recognize that co-occurring mental disorders often accompany substance-use disorders
4. Assess applicant needs and the appropriateness of the resident to meet these needs
5. Promote and use evidence-based practices
6. Written policies, procedures, and resident expectations
7. Ensures quality, integrity and resident safety
8. Learn and practice Cultural Competence
9. Maintain ongoing communication with interested parties and care specialists
10. Evaluate program effectiveness and resident success

# Staffed Safe and Sober Housing

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## 1. Staffed Safe and Sober Housing

### 1.1 Written Policies and Procedures

- 1.1.1. The housing program has written policies and procedures that establish house rules and requirements and include procedures for monitoring participant compliance and consequences for violating house rules and requirements.
  - 1.1.1.1. Protocols are established and followed for terminating a participant who violates the house rules and requirements.
  - 1.1.1.2 Participant is informed verbally and in writing of reasons for discharge.
  - 1.1.1.3 A process is in place that recognizes the rights of the participant to due process and allows the participant to request a formal review of the decisions;
  - 1.1.1.4 The reasons for discharge and any actions following are clearly documented in the participant's file.
- 1.1.2. Policies and procedures are clearly explained to each new participant by a staff member and the new participant signs a document verifying their understanding of these policies and procedures.
- 1.1.3. The housing program has policies prohibiting the use of alcohol and/or illicit drug use or seeking. Policies include procedures for associated searches by staff, drug screening and/or toxicology protocols.
- 1.1.4. The housing program maintains transparency in operational and financial decisions.
  - 1.1.4.1 The housing program maintains an accounting system that fully documents all participant financial transactions such as fees and payments.
- 1.1.5. The housing program promotes evidence-based practices that include, but are not limited to outpatient treatment, medication assisted treatment, behavioral therapies, community recovery supports, and peer and recovery coaching.
- 1.1.6. Participants and staff act with integrity and maintain a respectful environment.
  - 1.1.6.1. Privacy and personal rights of participants are respected and protected.
  - 1.1.6.2. Participants are treated fairly in all situations and rules are uniformly and consistently applied.
  - 1.1.6.3. Bullying, intimidation, sexual harassment, and/or other threatening behavior to participants, staff and visitors are not tolerated and the program has policies and processes for managing said behaviors.
- 1.1.7. The housing program does not tolerate retribution, intimidation, or any negative consequences as a result of a grievance and takes appropriate

action to prevent and/or stop such actions.

- 1.1.8. The housing program has courtesy rules for being courteous to neighbors and is responsive to neighborhood and/or community concerns.
- 1.1.9. The housing program has procedures in place collecting participant demographic information.
- 1.1.10. The housing program has procedures in place to collect data on measures such as abstinence from use, employment, criminal justice involvement, and social connectedness to gauge the effectiveness of services being provided.

**Special Consideration:** The data to be collected by the housing program may vary by funding source. Housing programs receiving funding from the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare – Division of Behavioral Health will need to adhere to data collection requirements established in the Idaho Behavioral Health Data Standard and the Idaho Behavioral Health Data Collection Guide.

## **1.2 Program Fees**

- 1.2.1. The housing program has written policies and procedures delineating program fees which include services and/or amenities included, and procedures are established to ensure participants understand the purpose of an imposed program fee.
- 1.2.2. Program fees are imposed equally on participants.
- 1.2.3. Any changes in program fees are disclosed to the participant written notification prior to being imposed and at least thirty (30) calendar days in advance of any increases taking effect.

**Special Consideration:** Participants receiving state funding for substance use disorder housing through the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare—Division of Behavioral Health are not billed rent but may be billed program fees by the housing program.

## **1.3. Culturally Responsive and Competent**

- 1.3.1. Staff are trained to engage with individuals on a personal basis and respect different beliefs and backgrounds
  - 1.3.1.1. Staff treat all participants with respect regardless of their personal backgrounds and beliefs.
  - 1.3.1.2. Staff are encouraged to understand, value and incorporate the cultural differences of participants in order to more appropriately respond to the needs of the participant.
- 1.3.2. The housing program is non-discriminatory and ensures service delivery is compatible with the cultural beliefs and practices of participants.

## **1.4. Assessment**

- 1.4.1. An assessment is completed on all potential participants to assess for their unique needs, strengths, challenges, and current recovery capital.
  - 1.4.1.1. The assessment is completed prior to referral and placement into a housing program to determine the appropriateness of the

program to meet the participants needs.

- 1.4.2. Placement in a housing program will be appropriately matched to the participant's needs and goals and the program's ability to achieve these ends.

### **1.5. Services and Supports**

- 1.5.1. The recovery needs of participants are the primary focus in all decision making.
- 1.5.2. Participants sign a release of confidentiality for ongoing communication between the program and individuals essential to the participant's continued success in recovery (ex: the referent, loved ones, treatment providers, certified peer recovery coach, criminal justice professional, etc.).
- 1.5.3. Participants are encouraged to become involved in the governance of the house (i.e. resident-driven length of stay and the development and implementation of some of the house rules), and other inhouse opportunities and activities that support recovery.
- 1.5.4. Participants are encouraged to play an active role in choosing their recovery path and to participate in treatment or aftercare activities as applicable.
- 1.5.5. Participants are encouraged to participate in daily living, physical, and leisure time activities and encourages the use of community resources for persons recovering from substance use disorders.
- 1.5.6. The housing program promotes supportive and recovery-oriented relationships between the participants and/or staff through peer-based interactions, house meetings, community gatherings, recreational events and/or other social activities.
- 1.5.7. The housing program provides information to participant on local treatment and recovery support services available to them include: 12 step or other mutual support groups, recovery centers, recovery ministries, recovery-focused leisure activities and recovery advocacy opportunities.

### **1.6. Medication Storage, Administration, Monitoring and Documentation**

- 1.6.1. The housing program has written policies and procedures for the storage and use of prescription and non-prescription medication. Policies and procedures include, but are not limited to:
  - 1.6.1.1. Proper storage of medication,
  - 1.6.1.2. Who is authorized to distribute medications and the specific times medications are distributed;
  - 1.6.1.3. Medication counts with staff and residents;
  - 1.6.1.4. Increased drug testing if suspected of diversion;
  - 1.6.1.5. Obtaining releases of information to allow for communication Between pertinent individuals, providers and staff;
  - 1.6.1.6. Proper documentation procedures;
  - 1.6.1.7. Monitoring of participants as needed; and
  - 1.6.1.8. Open discussions around medications (group topic, potential triggers, etc.)

### **1.7. Staffing in Staffed Safe and Sober Housing**

- 1.7.1. Staff, house manager and/or house coordinator are available and responsive to participants twenty-four (24) hours per day, seven (7) days a week.
- 1.7.2. Each residence employs at a minimum one house manager or housing coordinator.
  - 1.7.2.1. House managers and coordinators have at least one (1) year of experience or training working with substance use disorder clients.
- 1.7.3. Daily check ins are conducted by staff, house manager and/or house coordinator.
  - 1.7.3.1. Daily check ins include interacting with participants and confirming the wellbeing of each participant.
- 1.7.4. Staff model genuineness, empathy, and respect, and maintain clear personal and professional boundaries with participants.
- 1.7.5. Staff are informed of and understand how co-occurring disorders and their symptoms can contribute to a participant's susceptibility for relapse.
  - 1.7.5.1. Staff treat all participants with compassion and understanding regardless of mental health status.

**Special Consideration:** The organization's funding source will determine the type of background check to be completed for staff. Staff working or volunteering at residences receiving funding from the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare – Division of Behavioral Health will complete background checks through the Criminal History Unit.

### **1.8. Residence and Property Management**

- 1.8.1. All residences maintain a safe, clean, and sober home-like environment for participants who are transitioning back into the community.
- 1.8.2. Procedures, emergency numbers, and evacuation maps are posted in a conspicuous location in the resident for managing intoxication, withdrawal, overdose, and other emergencies that may happen. Emergency contact information is collected from, and emergency procedures are reviewed with, participants during orientation into the program.
- 1.8.3. The housing program has written policies and procedures to include frequency of check-ins and inspections and documentation of findings protocols.
  - 1.8.3.1. Inspections include safety inspections, certified home inspections, and living environment inspections.
- 1.8.4. The housing program abides by all local building and fire safety codes for each residence.
- 1.8.5. The housing programs provides and maintains adequate heat and ventilation.
- 1.8.6. The housing program provides each participant with a bed to sleep on.
- 1.8.7. The housing program has a washer and dryer on site.
- 1.8.8. The housing program maintains the interior and exterior of each residence

in a functional, safe and clean manner that is compatible with the neighborhood.

## Enhanced Staffed Safe and Sober Housing

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### 2. Enhanced Safe and Sober Housing (ESSH)

All ESSH programs maintain the same minimum standards as those outlined in the Staffed Safe and Sober Housing Standard. The standards outlined in this section are in addition to those outlined in the Safe and Sober Housing Standard.

#### 2.1. Services Provided

##### 2.1.1. ESSH Programs provide:

- 2.1.1.1. Comprehensive, responsive services, and 24/7 monitoring. The residences are staffed with a Program Manager, 24/7 staff, and provide Recovery Wellness/Recovery Coach/Peer Support Specialist services.
- 2.1.1.2. A minimum of two (2) hours per week of Recovery Coach services and participants are encouraged to participate in outside treatment or aftercare activities.
- 2.1.1.3. Collaboration with Idaho Housing and Finance and other housing agencies to help participants obtain a voucher for permanent housing.

2.1.2. Programs operate under the understanding that relapse does not necessarily result in automatic termination and instead establishes a plan for reestablishing compliance.

2.1.3. Programs are encouraged to provide Supplemental Security Income (SSI)/Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) case management to any participant that qualifies.

#### **References:**

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