

# MUNICIPAL INTRODUCTION TO RECOVERY-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES (RFC)

## WHAT IS A RECOVERY-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY?

Recovery-friendly communities make it easier for people to stay sober if they are in recovery from drug or alcohol addiction. An RFC would consider the needs of the recovery community when creating new policies, considering licensing, planning town-sponsored events, etc.

## HOW CAN YOUR TOWN BECOME RECOVERY-FRIENDLY?

### TOWN PLANS

Add public health language to the town plan about recovery. Making your town an RFC means including goals, policies, and recommendations that reflect this.

- ❖ For help with healthy community planning, including a Town Health Chapter Template, please visit:  
<https://www.trorc.org/programs/health/>

#### *Example town plan language:*

**Goal:** Promote health and wellness in [Town Name].

**Policy:** Reduce exposure to drugs, cannabis, tobacco/nicotine products, and alcohol.

**Recommendation:** The Town of [Town Name] should adopt an ordinance prohibiting the use of drugs, cannabis, alcohol, and tobacco/nicotine products on all town-owned properties.

### TOWN ORDINANCES/BYLAWS

See if your town ordinances and bylaws support recovery-friendly conditions. Does the town's zoning allow for recovery housing? Does the town prohibit alcohol and smoking (cannabis, nicotine, and tobacco products) in public spaces, at events, and on town-owned properties?

If your town has opted into retail cannabis, we recommend adding buffer zones and nuisance ordinances. Buffer zones can require a certain distance such as 1,000 feet between businesses focused on age-restricted products including drug and tobacco paraphernalia and places like schools, childhood centers, libraries, playgrounds and sport fields, recovery locations, etc. Nuisance ordinances can be used to prohibit the discharge of odors beyond the property line, which would prevent odors emitted from cannabis processing facilities from reaching recovery housing or places where people receive treatment or recovery services.

- ❖ For examples of these ordinances, visit the Health Policy Clearinghouse at:  
<https://www.trorc.org/healthpolicyclearinghouse>

### COMMITTEE ACTIONS

Community members can form a committee to act on addiction and recovery issues.

- ❖ For tips on how to form town health and wellness committees, see the Health & Wellness Planning Toolkit: <https://www.trorc.org/programs/health/health-wellness-planning-toolkit/>
- ❖ Turning Point Recovery Centers in Windsor County offers Recovery Ready Workforce trainings: <https://www.spfldtp.org/rw>

## EMPLOYMENT

Employment opportunities are needed in RFCs. Towns can lead by example by making the town itself a recovery-friendly workplace. Could people work for your town and feel they are supported in their recovery by the town as an employer?

- ❖ To learn more about Recovery-Friendly Workplaces, visit:

### *Recovery-friendly workplaces:*

- ❖ Provide employees with information and resources to promote health, well-being, and recovery for themselves and their family members.
- ❖ Connect with local recovery support organizations as a resource for employees.
- ❖ Educate supervisors and employees on existing alcohol, tobacco, and other drug policies upon hire and annually.
- ❖ Train and educate supervisors and employees on substance misuse, behavioral health, and addiction.

<https://www.recoveryfriendlyworkplace.com/initiative>

## EDUCATION

Your town is an important educational resource. The town can release information about substance use disorders, prevention, opportunities to support people in recovery, etc.

- ❖ The City of Bristol, Connecticut, has created a series of PSA-style videos which can be viewed on their website: <https://bristolallheart.com/our-community/a-recovery-friendly-community/>

## PREVENTING SUBSTANCE MISUSE AT TOWN LEVEL

Prevention efforts in your town may already be happening. Find out who is doing the work. How can the town help?

There are many town planning tools to prevent substance misuse. To find out more, connect with organizations who do this work.

- ❖ To see what groups are operating in your town, visit this map: [HTTP://tinyurl.com/HEALTHAREAS](http://tinyurl.com/HEALTHAREAS)
- ❖ More resources can be found in the Health Policy Clearinghouse: <https://www.trorc.org/healthpolicyclearinghouse>