

Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention

Recovery Friendly Workplace Work Group Meeting

January 21, 2025 via Zoom

Present:

David Shapiro and Dave Secunda, Co-chairs

Burke Fishburn, The Steadman Group

Danny Nelson, City of Fort Collins

John Narine, Recovery Friendly Leader

Liz Herod, Serenity Recovery Connection

Nele Cashmore, The Health Partnership

Wendy White, Face it Together

Stevie Kitterman, Grand County Rural Health Network

Laura Allem Sagebrush Recovery

Fred Palmer, CSU

Alia Andrews, CDHS

Duke Rumely, Sober AF Entertainment

Consortium: Jose Esquibel, Gina Olberding, Jen Place, Michael Davidson, Jennifer Mackender,

Eric Barker, Kristin Carpenter

Absent: See attached roster.

Co-Chair David Shapiro called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m. He began the meeting with a summary of the meeting agenda, including definitions of terms, and thanked Consortium staff for their assistance with work group efforts.

Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made to approve the November 2024 work group meeting minutes. Motion approved.

Website Review (David Shapiro):

The Recovery Friendly Workplace website was launched last week. The website includes an option for businesses viewing the site to sign the letter of intent.

www.corecoveryfriendlyworkplace.org

The following videos were created and posted on the website:

- A nurse who experienced opioid addiction and diverted them from a healthcare setting. In the video, she speaks about her experience, how it changed her career, and how she is now with other nurses in recovery.
- The owners of Odie B's, a restaurant in Metro Denver, are both in recovery from alcohol use. Seventy percent of their food service employees are in recovery.
- A construction superintendent who is six years in recovery from heroin addiction.

The website includes a newsroom, contact, link to the RFW Work Group and training webinars, and an advising section: <https://corecoveryfriendlyworkplace.org/resources/>. The advising section allows an organization to discuss the letter of intent prior to signing. There is a listing of all the current organizations (86), with most from the areas near the I-25 corridor. Some businesses in Routt County and the Western Slope have also participated. Companies that become certified as recovery friendly will be featured separately.

David provided an update of employer training and the resource guide developed for employers that would like to obtain support and assistance for people who need recovery support. Resource Guide request: <https://corecoveryfriendlyworkplace.org/resource-guide-request-form/>. Other links include Your Own Path <https://ownpath.co/> and Signal Behavioral Health's list of providers: <https://signalbhn.org/find-care/>

Jen asked if the Rocky Mountain Employee Assistance Professionals had been made aware of the recovery friendly initiative. John Narine said that he would be contacting them again. Jen also suggested that an email blast could be sent to appropriate employer networks.

Colorado legislation cited a goal of 100 employers participating in the program in year one (through June 30th). Legislation did not specify whether or not the companies would be certified.

David outlined the website process involved for companies to initiate and complete the program to achieve certification. There is also a page to list national and local events under the Resources heading. Work group meetings are listed and include a link to join.

Legislative Update:

Gov. Polis has requested a reduction in the state budget between \$700 and \$900 million for the upcoming fiscal year. Each governmental department has been asked to submit an updated budget or letter to the Joint Budget Committee detailing proposed cuts. The RFW Initiative is part of Senate Bill 24-048, which the Department of Higher Education recommended defunding beginning in July. Jose Esquibel said that information about the potential funding cut has been provided to RFW initiative advocates in the university Governmental Affairs Department. Plans to hire another advisor to work on the RFW program have been put on hold until more budget information is available. If budget cuts are made, the RFW initiative program would likely decrease the number of companies being certified, and the program would be incorporated into the general public healthcare infrastructure.

A discussion was held regarding funding received from opioid settlement funds through Boulder County's Substance Use Advisory Group (SUAG). Naloxone is being distributed in Boulder County workplaces, which is a priority for the Attorney General's office. The county is also working to better understand how substance misuse impacts the Spanish-speaking community. Partnerships have been established with the Latino Chamber of Commerce, Adelante!, and Sister Carmen in Boulder County. The RFW website will include information in Spanish. Dave Secunda's organization is headquartered in Boulder County.

Other Business

A proposal is being developed in collaboration with The Steadman Group for the next Colorado Opioid Abatement Council's Round 3 infrastructure funding. The proposal focuses on workforce development, skill building, and training for peer support specialists to assist companies that may want to have employee resource groups or other programs available. A trained peer can

help facilitate these groups. An example of a similar model is CHOW (Culinary Hospitality Outreach and Wellness) for the restaurant and hospitality sectors.

Fred Palmer said CSU is planning a career fair, which will be attended by employers. He asked about the availability of a one-page RFW infographic that he could distribute to employers. Fred said he would need approximately 200 copies. David said he has a 12-page employer orientation packet and suggested that employers also be referred to the website and letter of interest.

2025 Work Group Meeting Schedule:

The work group will be meeting quarterly in 2025. The April meeting will include a training update.

Adjournment/Next Meeting:

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m. The next work group meeting will be held on Monday, April 21, 2024 from 2–3 p.m. (MT).

Attachments: Work group roster