

## Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention

### Recovery Friendly Workplace Work Group Meeting

May 20, 2024 via Zoom

#### **Participants:**

David Shapiro and Dave Secunda, Co-Chairs

Burke Fishburn, The Steadman Group

Danny Nelson, City of Fort Collins

Donna Mae Baukat, Community Compassion Outreach Durango

Grace Kane, Community Resource Specialist

Jessica Angleson, Community Member

Jim Noone, University of Denver

John Narine, Recovery Friendly Leader

Kourtney O'Connor, Travelport

Kyle Tibbett, GRASP Consortium, Gunnison

Liz Herod, Serenity Recovery Connection

Marlo Alston, Ready to Work Aurora

BHA: Alia Andrews, Danielle Gillespie

Consortium: Jose Esquibel, Jen Place, Jennifer Mackender, Kristin Carpenter, Michael

Davidson, Eric Barker, Teresa Cantwell

**Absent:** See attached roster.

Co-Chair, David Shapiro, called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m. He reviewed the meeting agenda and summarized the RFW initiative. He noted that Colorado is the first state in the nation to pass recovery friendly legislation that includes a formal certification process.

#### **Approval of Minutes:**

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

#### **RFW Legislation:**

Colorado SB 24-048\* establishes a Recovery Friendly Workplace Program, the Recovery School Grant Program, and other substance use disorder recovery measures. The section of the bill calling for a specific advisory committee was removed. The work group will function as the de facto advisory committee to help launch the RF workplace certification program.

David reviewed components of the legislation, which has a four-year timeline and funding in the amount of \$1.5 million. At the end of the four-year period, the legislation will have to be reauthorized. The certification program will be launched later this year or in early 2025. To date, 36 companies have indicated an interest in participating in the voluntary program. Program funding will be announced on September 1<sup>st</sup>. The School of Public Health Center for Health, Work and Environment will administer the program and is tasked with creating training materials and employer resources. A summary of the legislation and funding is attached to the minutes. David thanked all the work group members who helped testify in support of the legislation.

\*May 16, 2024 version of SB 24-048: <https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb24-048>

### **Presentation: Recovery Friendly Leadership 101 (John Narine):**

John Narine helped author the Colorado Recovery Friendly Workplace Toolkit and founded the nonprofit Recovery Friendly Leader. The nonprofit trains company leaders and provides them with tools for a healthier, more productive workplace and strategies to support employees impacted by substance use. John's lived experience has informed his work in the recovery friendly workplace field. John's research is presented in his workbook, "Leading Workplace Addiction." The book, used during employer training, addresses existing workplace misconceptions regarding employees in recovery. Ten community leaders with diverse backgrounds and skills reviewed the workbook and provided valuable feedback. The workbook also covers several topics related to how managers or directors can appropriately address substance use problems in the workplace and what their responsibilities are as managers.

John is currently working on a presentation related to navigating the differences between the functions of a manager, a peer support specialist, an employee assistance counselor, and a sponsor and how these positions can be aligned to effectively support employees. One training objective focuses on educating managers about conversations that encourage recovery to prevent the recurrence of substance use. The workbook incorporates real world examples and role-playing exercises to help managers apply effective strategies. There is a section on laws pertaining to confidentiality and privacy and a sample performance improvement plan and return to work plan. John works with an HR consultant versed in employment law. John concluded his presentation with an exercise from the training workbook addressing a hypothetical employee with a substance use issue.

[www.recoveryfriendlyleader.org](http://www.recoveryfriendlyleader.org)

#### **Comments/questions:**

Several meeting participants stressed the importance of confidentiality when interacting with employees who have substance use issues. Safety concerns and rules associated with substance use impairment on the job were also discussed. Other comments related to the option of referring an employee to outside assistance.

### **Presentation: Kourtney O'Connor, Travelport:**

Kourtney is Manager of Global Talent Acquisition Projects at Travelport, a travel technology company based in the United Kingdom. To bring awareness to substance use disorders, she organized a company campaign in conjunction with Mental Health Awareness Month. A copy of her presentation is available upon request.

The campaign is a grassroots effort organized by employees, some of whom have been affected by mental health issues or who have loved ones experiencing substance use disorders. The company employs approximately 3,000 people internationally, with 350 located in the Denver office.

In addition to the goal of raising awareness of substance misuse, the campaign focuses on "humanizing" mental health and providing evidence-based information. Events organized by the campaign take place both locally in the Denver area and globally in places such as Dublin, Guadalajara, Barcelona, and Dubai. When the campaign is finished, employees will have an opportunity to complete a survey.

### **Upcoming Events:**

- Faces & Voices Recovery Leadership Summit (June 3-5)  
<https://rls.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org/>
- Colorado Rural Peer Conference (July 31-August 2)  
<https://thehealthpartnership.org/rural-peer-conference/>
- Health Links®: Recovery Friendly Workplace Webinar (August 29)  
[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_AP5c7N6RRVCRLOGIb2WK4w#/registration](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_AP5c7N6RRVCRLOGIb2WK4w#/registration)
- Colorado Society for Human Resource Management (September 18-20)  
<https://co.shrm.org/colorado-state-conference>
- International Health Facility Diversion Association (September 30-October 2)  
<https://ihfda.org/events/2024-annual-conference/>
- The Project ECHO Team at Dartmouth Health newest ECHO Series on Recovery Friendly Workplaces: every other Wednesday from 12-1 p.m.  
To participate: <https://iecho.org/public/program/PRGM17104213360500QKS9OBVA3>

### **Adjournment/Next Meeting:**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m. The next work group meeting will be held on Monday, July 15, 2024 from 2–3 p.m. (MT).

Attachments: Work group roster, Narine presentation