



mosaic
opioid recovery partnership

Mosaic Municipal Training and Technical Assistance

February Webinar Summary: *Recovery Coaching Basics and Best Practices for Municipalities*

What is Recovery Coaching?

[Recovery coaching](#) is a peer-driven approach where trained individuals with lived experience engage, build trust, and link people to treatment, harm reduction services, recovery supports, and other essential resources.

Why is Recovery Coaching Important for Municipalities?

Recovery coaches strengthen municipal opioid response systems while maintaining trust and voluntary engagement with people in or seeking recovery. Investing in recovery coaching helps municipalities:

- Reduce overdoses and other substance-related harms
- Increase service engagement and follow-through
- Strengthen coordination between public health, first responders, and community providers
- Support compliant, [high-impact use of opioid settlement funds](#)

Best Practice: Partner with Community-Based Organizations

Municipalities should consider partnering with an experienced recovery coach organization as a best practice rather than hiring coaches directly.

Effective partners provide:

- Employment, training, supervision and HR support
- Structured supervision and safety protocols
- Integration into outreach, post-overdose response, and co-response workflows (e.g., with Emergency Medical Services [EMS], hospitals, mobile crisis teams, etc.)
- Data tracking, outcome reporting, and continuous quality improvement
- Access to broader referral and service networks

Why is this important?

- Hiring unsupervised, stand-alone recovery coaches into municipal departments often leads to role confusion, isolation, burnout, and poor outcomes
- Recovery coaches perform best within organizations that provide supervision, training, growth opportunities, and community connections
- Partnering ensures fidelity to the recovery coach model, reduces risk, and maximizes impact

Using Opioid Abatement Funds for Recovery Coaching

Before funding recovery coaching, municipalities should ensure the following are in place:

1. Clear Role & Scope

- [Job description with clearly defined responsibilities](#)
- Explicit boundaries separating the recovery coaching role from clinical and enforcement functions

Maintaining clear boundaries between coaches and clinical or enforcement roles is essential for preserving trust and maintaining peer support values.

✓ **COACHES ARE:** Trained peer supporters, who are most effective with organizational supervision that understands peer support values and can model effective peer practice

✗ **COACHES ARE NOT:** Clinicians, case managers, law enforcement, or a transportation solution

2. Qualified Organizational Partner

- An experienced organization that employs, trains, and supervises coaches and:
 - Promotes clear ethical oversight, safety protocols, and ongoing training
 - Offers referrals for [multiple pathways of treatment](#), including medications for opioid use disorder, harm reduction, and other relevant supports

3. Referral & Outreach Infrastructure

- Established protocols for [post-overdose outreach](#) and follow-up engagement
- [Warm handoff processes](#) from EMS, emergency departments, or community providers
- Compliance with privacy laws and data sharing

4. Metrics & Reporting

- A plan to track meaningful outcomes, such as:
 - Engagement attempts and successful contacts
 - Warm handoffs to treatment or recovery supports
 - Follow-up contact rates
 - Trends in repeat overdose incidents
- **Avoid metrics that are [punitive](#) or imply enforcement approaches**

5. Sustainability & Non-Supplantation

- A distinct budget for salary, supervision, and administrative costs
- Assurance that opioid abatement funds are **not** being used to replace (supplant) existing funding for recovery coaching
- Plan for long-term sustainability beyond initial allocations



Bottom Line

Recovery coaching is a safe, cost-effective, and high-impact strategy. Through qualified organizational partners with supervision, clear boundaries, and adherence to best practices, recovery coaching can:

- Save lives and reduce overdoses
- Strengthen community systems
- Connect residents to care
- Use opioid settlement funds in a compliant and evidence-informed way

Massachusetts Opioid Abatement Guidance:

- [Massachusetts Abatement Terms](#)
- [MA Municipal Guidance for Abatement Payments](#)
- National Opioid Settlement ([Exhibit E](#))

Recovery Coach Resources:

- [Peer Recovery Support Services in Substance Use Treatment](#)
- [Peer Recovery Support Center Resources](#)
- [Comprehensive Recovery Support Education Resources](#)
- [Find a Recovery Coach](#)
 - Select "Recovery Coach" under "Contracted Services"



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