

Meeting Minutes of the Governor's Council on Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Community Engagement and Supports Subcommittee Transportation and Employment Workgroup Tuesday July 15, 2025, Approved

Attendees:

Workgroup Members Attending: Alyce Almond, Jeb Corey, Jonathon Compton, Deb Harris (co-chair), Bob Hansen, Ashley Payne (co-chair), Jay Phillips, Brie Salmons, Lorrie Smith

Workgroup Members Not Attending: Michael Austin, Danial Gum, Tamara Lee, Joshua McGill, Stephanie Thornton

Other Partners Attending: Leah Cook, Heather Jarrett, Gwynn McGee, Mark Lanyon, Brittany Lowther, Tiara Woods

ODCP Staff: Rick Dempsey, Olivia Fox, Dora Radford

Marshall University Staff: Bradley McCoy

Opening:

Deb Harris and Ashley Shaw (co-chairs) provided welcome and opening remarks for this meeting of the Governor's Council on Transportation and Employment. The meeting was called to order on Tuesday July 15 and was conducted in-person at Mountain State Educational Services Cooperative in Dunbar, West Virginia. A quorum was present to approve the May 28, 2025 minutes. Jonathan Compton made a motion to approve without changes, and Alyce Almond seconded with all in favor, and none were opposed. There was no further discussion and the minutes were approved. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss progress on 2025 State Plan key performance indicators (KPIs) and participate in the StigmaFreeWV stigma training.

Agenda Items:

Welcome and Introductions

- Attendees introduced themselves and shared the organization with which they are associated and how long they have participated in the Workgroup.
 - Tiara Woods attended as a representative for Josh McGill at Modivcare.
 - Olivia Fox is the new Executive Assistant at ODCP.
 - Heather Jarrett is new at the Bureau of Behavioral Health working with a focus in substance use disorder (SUD).

In-Person Subcommittee Chair Meeting with Dr. Stephen Loyd

- Rick Dempsey and Deb Harris provided an overview of the in-person meeting of Subcommittee chairs with Dr. Stephen Loyd in Charleston on June 26, 2025. Goals identified were to show measurable outcomes, navigate budget cuts, prepare the next legislative session, and identify opportunities for Subcommittee cross-collaboration.

Community Conversations (formerly referred to as Town Hall Meetings)

- Bradley McCoy and Rick Dempsey informed the group of the upcoming Community Conversations on the following dates/times/locations:
 - Wednesday August 27th 10:00-12:00 (Virtual)
 - Wednesday September 3rd 1:00-3:00 (Virtual)
 - Friday September 5th 1:00-3:00 (Virtual)
 - Tuesday September 9th 3:45-5:15 (Charleston, WV)
 - Thursday September 11th 6:00-8:00 (Logan, WV)
 - Monday September 15th 4:00-6:00 (Moorefield, WV)
 - Tuesday September 16th (4:00-6:00) Wheeling (WV)
- Bradley has distributed facilitator recruitment/volunteer information. The virtual meetings will have Subcommittee topic areas for breakout sessions with a facilitator like previous years, but the in-person meetings will be more general and conversational with Dr. Stephen Loyd with note takers.

Transportation KPI Updates

- **Goal 2, Strategy 1, KPI 1:** Completed in Q1. They have identified funding sources and submitted applications.
- **Goal 2, Strategy 1, KPI 2:** There are no updates from Brie Salmons. Leah Cook is in communication with ARC about their grant for Seed Sowers and Routes to Recovery to implement models in 11 more counties. Seed Sowers is currently in five counties and expanding with Recovery Point with the new grant. To date, Seed Sowers has performed approximately 300 trips for those with active substance use and those in treatment. The State Opioid Response (SOR) funds transportation in every county for everyone not taken by Modivcare to get to treatment/recovery services, but they must have opioid use disorder.
- **Goal 3, Strategy 1, KPI 1:** This was completed in Q2.
- **Goal 3, Strategy 1, KPI 2:** This was completed in Q2. Dr. Lyn O'Connell has provided resources.
- **Goal 3, Strategy 1, KPI 3:** The July 17, 2025 meeting included a presentation of the StigmaFreeWV stigma training. Participants have been informed of how to sign up for stigma training needs within their organizations.
- **Goal 3, Strategy 2, KPI 1:** This was completed in Q1.
- **Goal 3, Strategy 2, KPI 2:** This was completed in Q1.

Employment KPI Updates

- **Goal 4, Strategy 1, KPI 1:** The September recovery friendly employer training is scheduled for September 12, 19, & 26, 2025 from 9:00 to 10:15 AM. An agenda has been created for the three-session virtual training. Ashley Payne asked the Workgroup to please reach out if they would like to participate because there is room for additional speakers/panelists. The three sessions will include: defining what recovery friendly employers look like and champion second chance employers, providing stigma training, and explaining support and incentives that exist in West Virginia for employers.
- **Goal 4, Strategy 1, KPI 2:** Creating Opportunities for Recovery Employment (CORE) has completed internal assessments with employers. Additional assessments will be done after the September sessions.
- **Goal 4, Strategy 1, KPI 3:** There was a stigma training session at this meeting and there will be another one for employers in September.

- **Goal 4, Strategy 2, KPI 1:** Ashley Payne has ongoing meetings with Bev Sharpe from the REACH Initiative.
- **Goal 4, Strategy 2, KPI 2:** There are no updates on funding sources.

CORE Recovery Friendly Employer Sessions

- In relation to the Recovery Friendly Employer training sessions in September, Ashley Payne opened discussion with the Workgroup for examples of employer and employee champions that would be willing to tell their stories.
 - The City of Bluefield consistently hires recovery program graduates and Leah Cook is providing a contact for them.
 - WorkForce WV has a database of second-chance employers as part of a reentry project.
 - Jason Wilburn, President & CEO at Paul Wissmach Glass, was identified as an experienced panelist as a recovery employer.
 - Contacts were given to Ashley Payne for the Contractor's Association.
- Jonthan Compton with WorkForce WV or another representative will present on the bonding process, wage reimbursement, and incentives.
- Alyce Almond volunteered to speak about the small business perspective.

Housing Workgroup Updates

- Bob Hansen provided an update on the Housing Workgroup which is also in the Community Engagement and Supports Subcommittee.
- The number of certified recovery residence beds fluctuates as funding opportunities change.
- The Peer Recovery Support Specialist (PRSS) Conference in September will have a Housing track.
- A needs assessment is a top priority to identify deserts and stimulate growth. They are working with the Fletcher Group, Inc. on this.
- No recovery residences exist for men with children.
- The West Virginia Alliance of Recovery Residences (WVARR) is working to collect consistent data to evaluate communities and identify support.

Successes and Barriers Identified by the Workgroup

- The group openly discussed current successes and barriers within their respective fields/organizations.
- There is a need for drivers with lived experience in recovery to diminish stigma, but it is difficult to hire them due to criminal background checks. National credentialing requirements exist that would make it difficult to change at the state level. The group discussed how to formalize a process to fix this and discussed it as a PRSS driver model.
- The Workgroup discussed providing ODCP virtual stigma training/the StigmaFreeWV stigma training to all drivers.
- Successes identified were more community partnerships due to the visibility of groups such as these Workgroups.

Stigma Training

- Josh Murphy, Mingo County Prevention Coalition, and Nicole Horton, Pretera, gave the StigmaFreeWV stigma training presentation.

Adjournment:

Ashley and Deb closed the meeting by thanking all the Workgroup members for their attendance and participation. The regularly scheduled meeting in September will be cancelled because of conflicting schedules with multiple conferences/events. The Workgroup will schedule a meeting for October 2025 soon.