

State Launches Program to Support Individuals Experiencing Homelessness and Opioid Use Disorders

Written by GOV Press Wisconsin

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<http://newiproggressive.com/images/stories/S5/homeless-winter-s445.jpg>



New Recovery Voucher Program will use Opioid Settlement Funds for affordable, safe, stable housing.

MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers announced Wednesday the launch of the Recovery Voucher Program in partnership with the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) and the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA). The effort will be supported by a portion of Wisconsin's [McKinsey & Company opioid settlement funds](#), which provided the state with \$31 million to address the effects of the opioid epidemic. An initial \$2 million investment into the Recovery Voucher Program will help provide access to affordable, safe, and stable housing for individuals who are experiencing homelessness and have been diagnosed with opioid use disorder (OUD).



“Wisconsinites across our state have experienced the tragedy of the opioid epidemic firsthand, whether they are working to overcome opioid use disorder, they have a loved one, friend, or neighbor who is, or they’ve lost someone they love to this deadly epidemic,” said Gov. Evers. “These funds will be critically important in supporting those working through their recovery to

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find hope, healing, and help folks regain dignity and security through safe housing.”

“Basic needs, like housing or food, need to be met before anyone can overcome an illness, including opioid use disorder. Too often individuals in treatment and recovery for substance use disorder lack the safe and stable housing necessary to support them in their journey,” said DHS Deputy Secretary Deb Standridge. “We are grateful that Gov. Evers recognizes this and supports the Recovery Voucher Program to allow people with opioid use disorder to have a firm foundation on their journey toward recovery.”

DOA’s Division of Energy, Housing and Community Resources (DEHCR) will administer the program, leveraging supportive housing expertise and strong existing partnerships with the Continuum of Care (CoC) Program in Milwaukee, Dane, and Racine counties, as well as local coalitions serving the other 69 counties across the state.

“We’re proud to partner with DHS and local agencies to ensure that folks get their basic housing needs met through this important program,” said DOA Secretary-designee Kathy Blumenfeld. “Safe housing and shelter are critical for recovery, as they are for every Wisconsinite.”

Housing agencies chosen through a competitive grant process will begin working with Recovery Residences starting Jan. 1, 2023. Wisconsin residents diagnosed with OUD who have been homeless or are at risk of homelessness will have the opportunity to continue their journey to sober living through access to Recovery Residences.

More information on the program is available [here](#).