



RE: HB 1528 SEC 5: Effective January 1, 2023 – Substance Use Disorder Recovery Support Services—Recovery Residence Referrals

DATE: January 5th, 2022

TO: Behavioral Health Agencies

We have been contracted by the WA State Health Care Authority to communicate important information to you about the upcoming referral mandate required by the legislature in HB 1528 passed in 2019. The mandate **goes into effect January 1, 2023**; however, steps must be taken ahead of this date to ensure minimal disruption to your referral practices and client care.

This new law created chapters [41.050.760 RCW](#) and [71.24.660 RCW](#) and applies to the following settings:

- Outpatient treatment centers,
- Inpatient treatment units, and
- Any other location, such as an outpatient clinic, where staff may assess or refer a patient to a recovery residence for a substance use disorder.

As of January 1, 2023, referrals to [recovery residences](#) can only be made to residences that are listed on the [Recovery Residence Registry](#) maintained by the WA Health Care Authority. The registry comprises all legitimate Oxford House locations and facilities accredited by the Washington Alliance for Quality Recovery Residences ([WAQRR](#)). WAQRR is a nonprofit organization that contracts with the HCA to accredit recovery residences and provide quality technical assistance to residence operators. Our goal is to increase the quality and quantity of recovery homes in Washington.

To ensure that you can continue to refer clients to the most appropriate settings for the next phase of their recovery, **our goal is to accredit as many unaccredited homes as possible this year.** To that end, we're asking you to take two important actions right away:

1. Please share your recovery housing referral list with us. We recognize that some of these lists exist informally and may take some effort to compile. That said, as soon as we receive contact information for a residence, we'll be in touch with the housing operator to orient them to the accreditation process. The sooner this happens, the better as the process can take two to three months to complete. There's no need to send us information about Oxford House locations or other homes that are already on the registry. AND
2. We strongly encourage you to reach out to the housing operators to whom you currently refer clients and make them aware of the state referral mandate. If they know about the change soon enough, they'll have time to gain WAQRR accreditation and be listed on the state registry.

The easiest way to send your list is via email to certification@waqrr.org. This is also the best contact email for operators who want to know more about the process.

We will be communicating with you again as we get closer to the start of the mandate. If you have questions, please contact us and we'll work to provide answers as soon as possible.

Thank you in advance for your partnership in this important endeavor. We hope that this collaboration will lead to minimal disruption and even better outcomes for our mutual clients.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jason Bliss", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jason Bliss
Executive Director