

The Recovery to Work Ecosystem Framework

DDAA developed a framework of goals, challenges, and solutions for regional leaders to use in assessing gaps and opportunities in their regional recovery-to-work ecosystems in the report [Addressing Appalachia's Substance Use Disorder Crisis Through Recovery-to-Work](#). The framework offers regions a systematic approach to assessing and strengthening these ecosystems and building capacity among three key constituencies: the community, employers, and workers in recovery. The recovery to work ecosystem framework distills the common ground for collaboration to three main goals.

Three Goals for Regional Recovery-to-Work Ecosystems



Goal 1
Organizing regional stakeholders to create a continuum of care



Goal 2
Engaging and supporting businesses as recovery-to-work partners



Goal 3
Facilitating wrap-around support for workers in recovery

Recovery-to-Work Ecosystem Goal 1:

Organizing Regional Stakeholders to Create a Continuum of Care



“Recovery-to-work ecosystems require efficient regional stakeholder collaboration to achieve their goals. Individuals are especially vulnerable as they transition between different recovery steps while moving through treatment to employment. [...] Regional collaborations need to engage businesses, service providers, community leaders, and policymakers to effectively integrate the local recovery-to-work ecosystem.” -- [Addressing Appalachia's Substance Use Disorder Crisis Through Recovery-to-Work](#)

Approaches:

- Map local assets to understand the full landscape of available services and to identify gaps.
- Conduct outreach and analysis to gain insights into stakeholder priorities and regional capacity.
- Help social service organizations coordinate as they engage with employers.
- Ensure service providers in key areas have access to a consistent set of resources to serve both employer and workers.
- Reduce stigma among community leaders to gain greater attention and focus.
- Provide community-wide education and awareness about SUD as a chronic health condition with social consequences for workers in recovery.

Recovery-to-Work Ecosystem Goal 2:

Engaging and Supporting Businesses as Recovery-to-Work Partners



“A recovery-to-work ecosystem cannot succeed without the active engagement of the employer community. Employment is not only an outcome of recovery, but it is also a contributor to long-term, successful recovery. In Appalachia, the issue of engaging employers in recovery-to-work hiring takes on added importance due to critical workforce shortages throughout the region.” -- [Addressing Appalachia’s Substance Use Disorder Crisis Through Recovery-to-Work](#)

Approaches:

- Help employers to articulate and communicate their concerns and challenges associated with hiring and retaining people in recovery.
- Identify and recruit early adopting employers to serve as champions and engage in outreach effort.
- Make the business case for hiring and retaining workers in recovery.
- Provide best practice guidance for employers in hiring workers in recovery to reduce potential risks.
- Provide best practice guidance for employers in supporting workers in recovery to encourage job retention.

Recovery-to-Work Ecosystem Goal 3:

Facilitating Wrap-around Support for Workers in Recovery



“Recovery from a substance use disorder requires support, guidance, and assistance addressing an individual’s physical, emotional, and financial needs. First and foremost, people need quality health care, including access to medication-assisted treatments and counseling to support both physical and mental well-being, comprising the foundation for SUD treatment. [...] Living in a community with a high quality of life (including quality employment) improves overall well-being and life satisfaction and in turn reduces the likelihood of substance use disorder.” -- [Addressing Appalachia’s Substance Use Disorder Crisis Through Recovery-to-Work](#)

Approaches:

- Provide worker-friendly access to treatment and recovery services.
- Provide opportunities for jobseekers to improve their skills or develop their careers.
- Offer people in recovery access to essential wrap-around support services that will improve their chance of success.