



# OPIOID RESTITUTION FUND ADVISORY COUNCIL

November 1, 2024

The Honorable Wes Moore  
Governor, State of Maryland  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

The Honorable Aruna Miller  
Lt. Governor, State of Maryland  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

**RE: Health General Article § 7.5-905 — Opioid Restitution Fund Advisory Council — Annual Recommendations (MSAR # 14404)**

Dear Governor Moore and Lt. Governor Miller:

Pursuant to Health General Article § 7.5-905 and in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article, Maryland's Office of Overdose Response submits the attached recommendations on behalf of the Opioid Restitution Fund (ORF) Advisory Council for utilizing proceeds from prescription opioid-related legal settlements contained in Maryland's Opioid Restitution Fund. Specifically, Health General Article § 7.5-905 requires the ORF Advisory Council to provide recommendations to the Governor by November 1 of each year. The recommendations should consider "the following criteria:

1. The number of people per capita with a substance use disorder in a jurisdiction;
2. Disparities in access to care in a jurisdiction that may preclude persons;
3. The number of overdose deaths per capita in a jurisdiction;
4. The programs, services, supports, or other resources currently available to individuals with substance use disorders in a jurisdiction; and
5. Disparities in access to care and health outcomes in a jurisdiction."

As required, five physical copies of this report will be delivered to the Department of Legislative Services library. Please contact me at [emily.keller@maryland.gov](mailto:emily.keller@maryland.gov) with any questions.

Sincerely,

Emily Keller  
Special Secretary of Overdose Response  
Enclosure

**cc:** Sarah Case Herron, MDH Director of Governmental Affairs  
Sarah Albert, Department of Legislative Services, 5 copies (MSAR # 14404)

## Fiscal Year 2025 Funding

As of October 23, 2024, the balance in the ORF is:

- State Allocation: \$44,102,564
- State Discretionary Abatement Fund: \$31,256,605
- **Total: \$75,359,169**

## Recommendations

In 2024, the ORFAC met five times and accepted public comment verbally and in writing. The council voted to build upon their 2023 recommendations, with minor adjustments and adding a section on process-related recommendations.

### Improve Infrastructure for Opioid Initiatives

- Enhance Interagency and Interdepartmental Data Sharing
- Improve Strategic Partnerships between State, Local, and Community Organizations
- Analyze Emerging Drug Trends

### Promote Youth Resiliency

While youth substance use rates have remained relatively stable, youth overdose rates in some areas of the state are increasing. Prevention programs that address social determinants of health are vital, as is education on harm reduction measures, such as naloxone and fentanyl test strips.

- Raise Awareness of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) in Schools and Communities
- Support and Expand Evidence-Based Prevention Programming
  - Partner with schools to provide evidence-based substance use awareness training and support for parents, e.g., Night of Conversation, Threat in Plain Sight.
  - Promote engagement of individuals in recovery with prevention programming
- Support for families
  - Work with family support and youth prevention coalitions to promote healthy coping mechanisms and address roots of community trauma, such as expansion of prevention clubhouses.

## **Increase Awareness of the Opioid Crisis**

- Create Accurate and Data-Driven Messaging focusing on the following areas:
  - Youth awareness
  - Available harm reduction, treatment, and recovery services

## **Expand Harm Reduction Services**

- Overdose prevention sites
- Expand Targeted Naloxone Distribution
- Expand Targeted Harm Reduction Outreach

## **Promote Comprehensive Care Coordination**

- Expand Mobile Health Clinics
- Improve Long-Term Intensive Case Management, including for those under the age of 18
- Services for individuals upon re-entry from carceral settings

## **Expand Maryland's Crisis Response System**

- Continue to Identify and Fill Gaps in Crisis Services, including youth and family services

## **Expand Access to Treatment for Opioid Use Disorder**

- Promote MOUD Induction in Emergency Departments and through EMS
- Improve Primary Care Provider Engagement
- Expand MOUD to All Correctional Facilities (SUD treatment and services within detention centers)
- Youth substance use treatment, including funding for treatment for undocumented and uninsured youth
- Transportation to treatment and recovery services

## **Support Recovery Communities**

- Promote Opportunities to Embed Peers in Community Settings
  - Reinforce and Support the Peer Workforce, including by fully funding benefits for permanent positions
- Develop and Support Recovery Community Infrastructure
- Increase Access to Recovery and Permanent Supportive Housing

- Access to inclusive recovery resources, including for LGBTQIA+ populations.
- Support recovery community organizations

## **Process Recommendations**

While determining the process for distributing ORF funds, the council requests that the state consider the following process-related recommendations:

1. Explore a Ryan White model for funding and address language in the statute to allow for any use outlined in Exhibit E.
2. Approach funding with an equity lens (CBO vs. larger organizations)
3. Explore upfront funding
4. Explore ability for for-profit entities to access ORF funds
5. Continue to consider multi-year grants