

Recovery Friendly Workplace

The Nevada Recovery Friendly Workplace Initiative, a partnership between the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services and Foundation for Recovery, is aiming to reduce the stigma of substance use and mental health recovery in the workplace. Participating business owners and senior management gain free resources, customized training, and ongoing support to establish their business as a Recovery Friendly Workplace in Nevada.

Enrolled employers work directly with an assigned Recovery Friendly Ambassador who guides them throughout the designation process. The Recovery Friendly Ambassador customizes each training and resource to meet the specific needs of the employer. Upon designation, employers receive a signed certificate from the Governor's office, storefront window clings, anonymous support kits containing directories of local resources, overdose prevention kits, and other items, and ongoing support and assistance to help them foster a workplace culture that celebrates their employees in recovery. There is no cost for businesses to participate in the initiative.

Recovery Friendly Workplaces are employers that are actively creating an inclusive working environment for their employees impacted by substance use and mental health. RFWs provide supportive resources to their employees and foster a culture that celebrates recovery. The movement of recovery friendly workplaces has grown to 27 states and several have had great successes by working collaboratively with recovery oriented community agencies and the private sector. Nevada is proud to be one of those states.

1 in 3 people are affected by Substance Use Disorders. The majority of those people are going to work every day and it's important that our employers are equipped to support their employees should they need help, not unlike other physical illnesses.

People in recovery are our staff, customers, friends, family and members of our community.

The Recovery Friendly Workplace Initiative is endorsed and fully supported by Nevada's executive office.

Presenters

Sean O'Donnell

Sean currently serves as the Executive Director of Foundation for Recovery and is a person living in recovery from substance use disorder. He grew up in Minneapolis, Minnesota where he studied public relations and project management. During graduate school, Sean lost two close friends to the disease of addiction. Soon afterward he became involved with several nonprofit and national advocacy organizations working to curb opioid overdose deaths. Prior to coming to Nevada, Sean worked for the Steve Rummeler HOPE Network (SRHN) throughout grad school where he was actively supporting their advocacy, prescriber education, and overdose prevention programs. In this role, he traveled to counties across Minnesota and trained people on how to recognize and respond to an opioid overdose. He helped secure funding for naloxone and raised awareness of various harm reduction strategies through numerous events, advancing the organization's reach and capacity. While at SRHN, the organization passed landmark legislation, organized marches in Washington D.C., and developed novel programming to survey and help the state. Sean was eventually promoted to the Director of Programs and assisted the Executive Director with all operations, working tirelessly to expand access to free continuing education on the topics of substance use disorder and pain management for prescribers and increased availability of the opioid overdose antidote, naloxone, in lay communities. Through his state-wide advocacy, he helped build and work with grassroots coalitions to support recovery policies that get through the Minnesota legislature. He also was engaged with and/or is currently collaborating with The FED UP! Coalition; Physicians for Responsible Prescribing Open Recovery; and The Voices Project.

Whether it's through working with the media, designing campaigns, building websites, Sean lends his skills to further the recovery movement and highlight individuals and organizations making a difference in their community. As a strategic communicator and marketer, Sean values the power of telling transformative stories and believes many of us have more in common than we believe. He is deeply interested in massive open online learning and how technology can engage and bridge education in communities across the world. He hopes to continue studying how

social and behavioral change communication can improve public health, challenge stigmas, and make our communities a healthier and safer place to live. His educational background is in public relations and project management. In graduate school, he studied technical and scientific communications, mostly working on projects and research which involved online education, user experience design, web development, and software engineering. His goal is to complete a Doctorate in Public Health (DrPH) program and devote his life to helping his peers, people with substance use disorder and mental illness.

Sean has been with Foundation for Recovery since June 2019 and possesses the leadership skills to take an already dynamic organization to new heights.

Samantha Steele

My name is Samantha Steele and I am a native to Las Vegas, NV. I am a proud and grateful person in long term recovery. For the past 14 years I have been privileged to be employed in the non-profit and social service field in my hometown. I have worked one on one with the homeless and those struggling with co-occurring issues (substance use disorder and mental health challenges). Additionally, I have experience developing programs for non-profits that help enhance the lives of the clientele they serve.

Currently, I serve as the Initiative Director of the NV Recovery Friendly Workplace at Foundation for Recovery. I have seen substance use disorder and mental health challenges, coinciding with suicide, take the lives of many people I have known and many I have loved. I have seen it destroy families. I have also seen recovery save lives and rebuild families. I am a person for the reason this initiative exists, both prior to my recovery and while in recovery.

The purpose of the Nevada Recovery Friendly Workplace (RFW) Initiative is to promote individual wellness by creating work environments that further the mental and physical wellbeing of employees. The RFW helps prevent substance misuse, addressing mental health and celebrating recovery, in the workplace and our community. The RFW challenges the stigma attached to substance use disorder and mental health. It will help save lives and strengthen families whole enhancing workplace wellness.

This effort is led by Foundation for Recovery, in collaboration with the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services, the Division and Welfare and Supportive Services. It is supported by Nevada's executive office. All training has been approved by the state of Nevada.