



What to look for in a Recovery House

Recovery Housing can be a helpful resource for people in recovery from substance use disorders. Recovery housing provides a living environment that is free from illicit drugs and alcohol with a focus on peer support and connection to other recovery services. You may choose to live in recovery housing before, during, and/or after engaging in a treatment program.

There is a certification for recovery housing operators. To search for recovery housing operators that meet quality standards visit: www.find.ohiorecoveryhousing.org or contact us at 614-228-0747.

However, recovery houses are not required to obtain this certification in order to operate. So, it can be difficult to tell if a recovery house is meeting basic quality standards. The following are a few key elements to look for when making a decision about recovery housing.

Financial and other terms are clear

You should receive a written resident agreement before you move in or pay any fees or deposits. This agreement should tell you what fees are due and when. This agreement should also explain what code of conduct or other behavior guidelines you must follow in order to stay at the house. You should know under what circumstances you may be asked to leave the house. The operator should be able to answer any questions you may have before requiring you to sign the agreement or make a payment. You should not be asked to waive your individual or fair housing rights.

The house maintains an environment free from alcohol and illicit drug use

The operator should have a comprehensive strategy for ensuring that the environment is free from alcohol and illicit drugs. This strategy can vary from house to house – but the operator should be able to explain to you how they ensure a recovery environment. As a resident, you will likely have to follow a specific code of conduct that helps the house maintain a recovery environment.

Opportunities to develop positive relationships

The recovery house should engage with you in developing positive relationships with others in the house and with your community. This is usually done through both formal recovery oriented activities such as house meetings, assisting you with finding a sponsor, mentor or other mutual aid supporter, offering peer support or other recovery supports. The house also should engage in recreational and informal activities that are designed to help you develop positive relationships, live in the house as a family, and build community.

Ask yourself if the house feels like a home

The recovery house should look and feel like home. You should have access to common areas of the house, be able to buy, store and prepare your own meals and snacks, and be able to have personal items and belongings. You should have access to basic utilities, hot water and working appliances. Furniture should be in good condition and used appropriately.

Put your safety first

The recovery house should be following all local building and fire codes designed to keep residents safe. Residents should not be overcrowded. Residents should also have emergency contact information available in case of an emergency. The bedrooms should have appropriate exits, and the house should have smoke alarms, fire extinguishers and other safety equipment.