

Recovery Housing vs. Sober Living

WHAT IS RECOVERY HOUSING?

Recovery housing is “housing for individuals recovering from alcoholism or drug addiction that provides an alcohol and drug-free living environment, peer support, assistance with obtaining alcohol and drug addiction services, and other alcoholism and drug addiction recovery assistance.” (O.R.C. 340.01(3)).

WHAT IS “SOBER LIVING”?

There is no widely accepted definition of “sober living”. A “sober living” home may or may not meet the definition of recovery housing. Residents, family members, and communities should use caution if an organization is described as a sober living home to ensure that the environment meets their needs.

HOW DO I TELL IF A HOME IS QUALITY?

This no required licensure or certification in order to operate a recovery home. Ohio Recovery Housing offers a voluntary certification for recovery homes, but this certification is not required to operate or receive funding or referrals. Oxford House and CARF also offer quality certifications for different levels of recovery housing. Potential residents and families can ask questions and get information on recovery housing programs in their communities. See ORH’s [5 Questions to Ask a Recovery Housing Operator](#) for advice for potential residents and families when looking for quality recovery housing.

KEY POTENTIAL DIFFERENCES

	Recovery Housing	Sober Living
Landlord Tenant Laws/ Fair Housing Laws	All recovery homes are subject to Ohio Landlord Tenant Laws as well as state and federal fair housing laws	All sober living homes are subject to Ohio Landlord Tenant Laws as well as a state and federal fair housing laws.
Health Care Fraud and Abuse Laws/ Anti-kick back statues, Inducements	All recovery homes are required to follow laws that protect individuals from unethical business practices	All sober living homes are required to laws that protect individuals from unethical business practices
Quality Standards	There is no requirement to be certified to operate a recovery home in Ohio.	There is no requirement to be certified to operate a sober living home in Ohio
Illicit Drug and Alcohol-Free Living Environment	All recovery housing properties must have policies, procedures and practices that maintain an illicit drug and alcohol-free living environment.	Sober Living environments may or may not have policies or practices designed to maintain an environment that is free from all illicit substances and alcohol use
Safe, Clean and Healthy Physical Environment	All recovery homes are subject to state and local health, safety and building codes. Recovery homes are also encouraged to follow the guidelines set forth in the OhioMHAS quality housing criteria.	All sober living homes are subject to state and local health, safety and building codes. Sober living homes may or may not meet the guidelines set forth in the OhioMHAS quality housing criteria.

<p>Connection to services and supports in the community</p>	<p>All recovery homes work with the resident to identify services and supports that a resident may need to enter and sustain long-term recovery. All recovery homes help connect residents to resources appropriate for them.</p>	<p>Sober living homes may or may not provide residents with help identifying needs and connecting to local resources.</p>
<p>Peer support</p>	<p>All recovery homes have specific policies, procedures, and programs in place to ensure environments where residents have appropriate peer support based on their individual needs.</p>	<p>Sober living homes may or may not have environments that integrate peer support.</p>
<p>Recovery Planning</p>	<p>All recovery homes engage with individual residents to help them develop recovery plans. Homes provide support and accountability for residents as they engage in their plans.</p>	<p>Sober living homes may or may not help residents develop recovery plans. Sober living homes may or may not provide accountability for residents as they implement their recovery plans.</p>
<p>Community Building</p>	<p>All recovery homes have active strategies to help residents develop community and a physical environment that promotes community. Residents live in the home as functionally equivalent family.</p>	<p>Sober living homes may or may not have strategies that promote community or a functionally equivalent family</p>
<p>Resident Rights</p>	<p>High quality recovery homes have a statement of resident rights and policies and practices that uphold those rights</p>	<p>Sober living homes may or may not have policies or practices that uphold resident rights</p>
<p>Staff</p>	<p>Quality Recovery homes have appropriate staff depending on their level of support. All staff have position descriptions and engage in training, staff development and performance reviews</p>	<p>Sober Living homes may or may not have staff. Staff may or may not have specific training, staff development or performance reviews.</p>