

Behavioral Health Town Hall

August 2026

Marissa Eyanson, Director of Behavioral Health, Iowa
HHS



Health and
Human Services

Welcome!

Overview

Recovery in Iowa

Recovery Strategy Spotlights

- **Recovery Housing**
- **Recovery Community Centers**
- **Family-Based Recovery**
- **Recovery Conference**

Recovery Priorities

Other Noteworthy Items

Recovery in Iowa

Marissa Eyanson

What is Recovery?

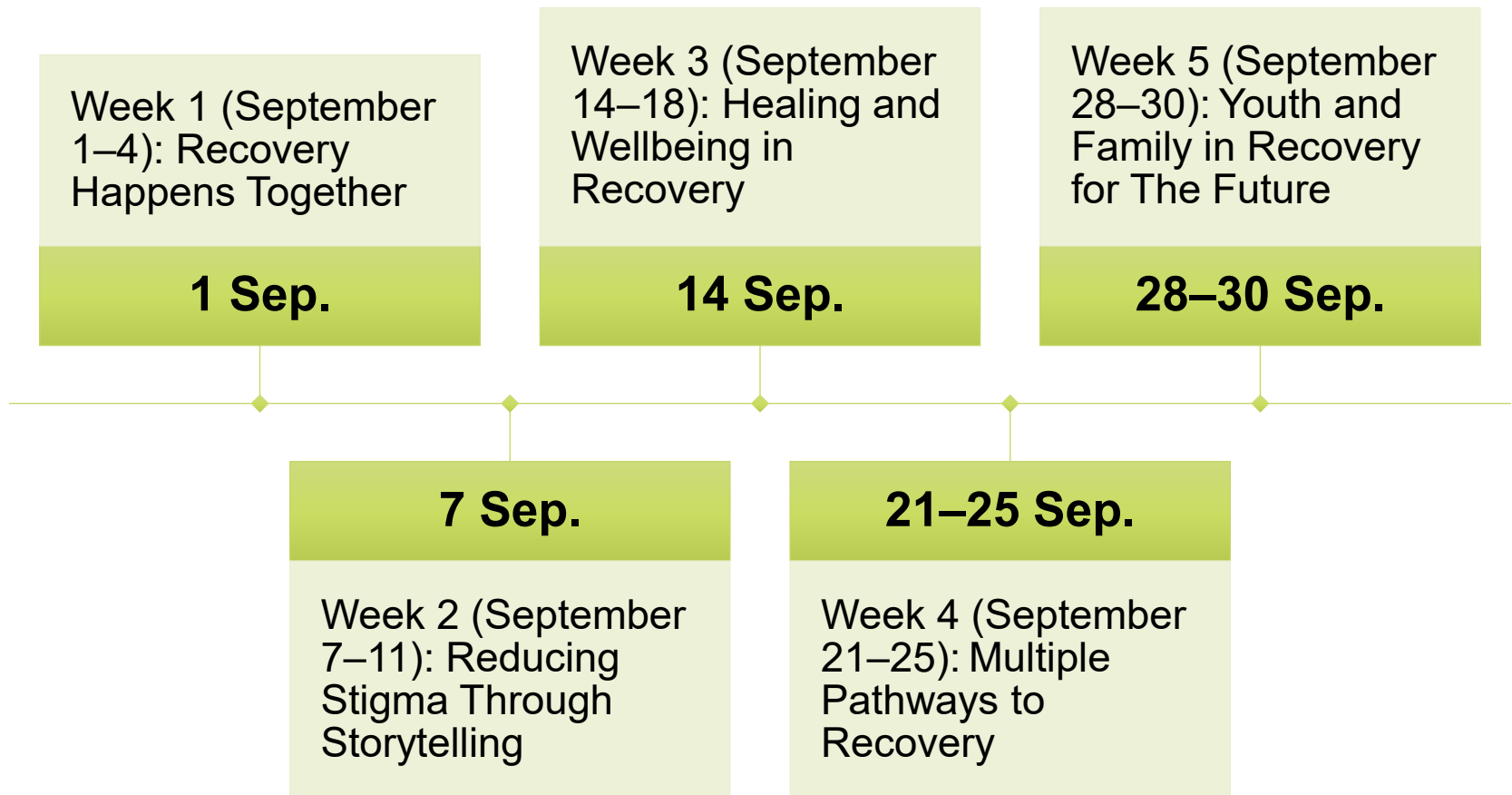
- **A process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential.**

September is National Recovery Month

National Recovery Month is an opportunity to celebrate that progress, recognize those who make recovery possible, and invite every person to be part of building recovery-ready communities.

The year's theme, "**Recovery is REAL (Restoring Every Aspect of Life)**", emphasizes that with the right treatment, support, and resources, recovery is possible.

SAMHSA Recovery Toolkit



Dimensions of Recovery

Health – Overcoming or managing illness or symptoms, making informed healthy choices, and supporting physical and emotional well-being.

Home – Having a stable, safe place to live.

Purpose – Engaging in meaningful daily activities (work, education, caregiving, volunteering, creative pursuits) and having the independence, income, and resources to participate in society.

Community – Building supportive relationships and social networks that provide friendship, love, and hope.

Vision for Recovery in Iowa

Recovery is the expectation, not the exception.

Investing in the work of Recovery is vital to improving the health and wellbeing of Iowans and our communities.

Recovery values multiple pathways.

Multiple Pathways

**1. Peer and
Mutual Support
Groups**

**2. Counseling
and Therapy**

**3. Medication-
Assisted
Treatment
(MAT)**

**4. Family and
Community
Involvement**

**5. Holistic and
Lifestyle
Approaches**

**6. Online and
Digital
Recovery
Support**

**7. Advocacy
and Self-Help
Resources**

Why Are Multiple Pathways of Recovery Important?

Personalization: Recovery is tailored to individual needs and preferences

Holistic healing: Addresses wellness of mind, body, and spirit, not just the disease or disorder

Resilience: Combines structured support with personal growth to sustain recovery

Multiple Pathways of Recovery

We honor that there is more than one way to find and maintain recovery, we also honor each person's individuality and unique life experiences - we can celebrate all pathways of recovery.



Iowa's Behavioral Health Statewide Service System plan: create and support a comprehensive, integrated, statewide system focused on recovery.

Recovery Strategy 1

Create and support a comprehensive, integrated, statewide system of recovery related to the needs of Iowa families and communities (page 45 of the BHSS Statewide Plan).

Faraji Hubbard & Mistie Parrish

Recovery Housing

Faraji Hubbard

Tactic 1.3: Improve access to recovery services and supports

A critical gap identified through the Behavioral Health Service System Assessment was Recovery Housing in Iowa.

SAMHSA notes that recovery housing can:

- Help people **obtain and sustain recovery**
- **Increase employment outcomes**
- **Improve housing stability**
- Reduce reliance on costly systems like hospitals, emergency services, and incarceration

Recovery Housing has a broader impact on health and systems.

Recovery Residences are safe, healthy, family-like, substance-free living environments that support individuals in recovery from addiction. Founded on the social model of recovery principles, Recovery Residences mindfully cultivate prosocial bonds, a sense of community, and a safe home for individuals in all stages of recovery.



Recovery Housing Overview

- ▶ **Recovery Housing:** plays an important role in Iowa's continuum of behavioral healthcare. For many individuals living with a substance use disorder, treatment can be an important step, but it is only one part of the recovery journey. Having a safe, healthy, and recovery-supportive place to live can help individuals sustain their progress and establish a strong foundation for long-term recovery.
- ▶ To strengthen recovery housing across the state, Iowa HHS has invested in the standards and certification established by the National Alliance for Recovery Residences (NARR) and created Iowa certification in 2022.



National Alliance for Recovery Residences



- **Recovery Residence:** a term describing a National Alliance for Recovery Residences (NARR) certified recovery house

- **National Alliance for Recovery Residences (NARR):** NARR has established a national standard for recovery residences. This standard defines the spectrum of recovery - oriented housing and services and identifies four different levels of support for providers to choose from for their residence.

Levels of Support



Developed by NARR
Adopted by SAMHSA

Our Progress

Iowa welcomed its first NARR-certified recovery residence in September 2022—a 34-bed residence for women in Des Moines.

Sep. 2022

Iowa has 23 certified recovery residences offering 342 beds, including 161 beds for men and 181 beds for women.

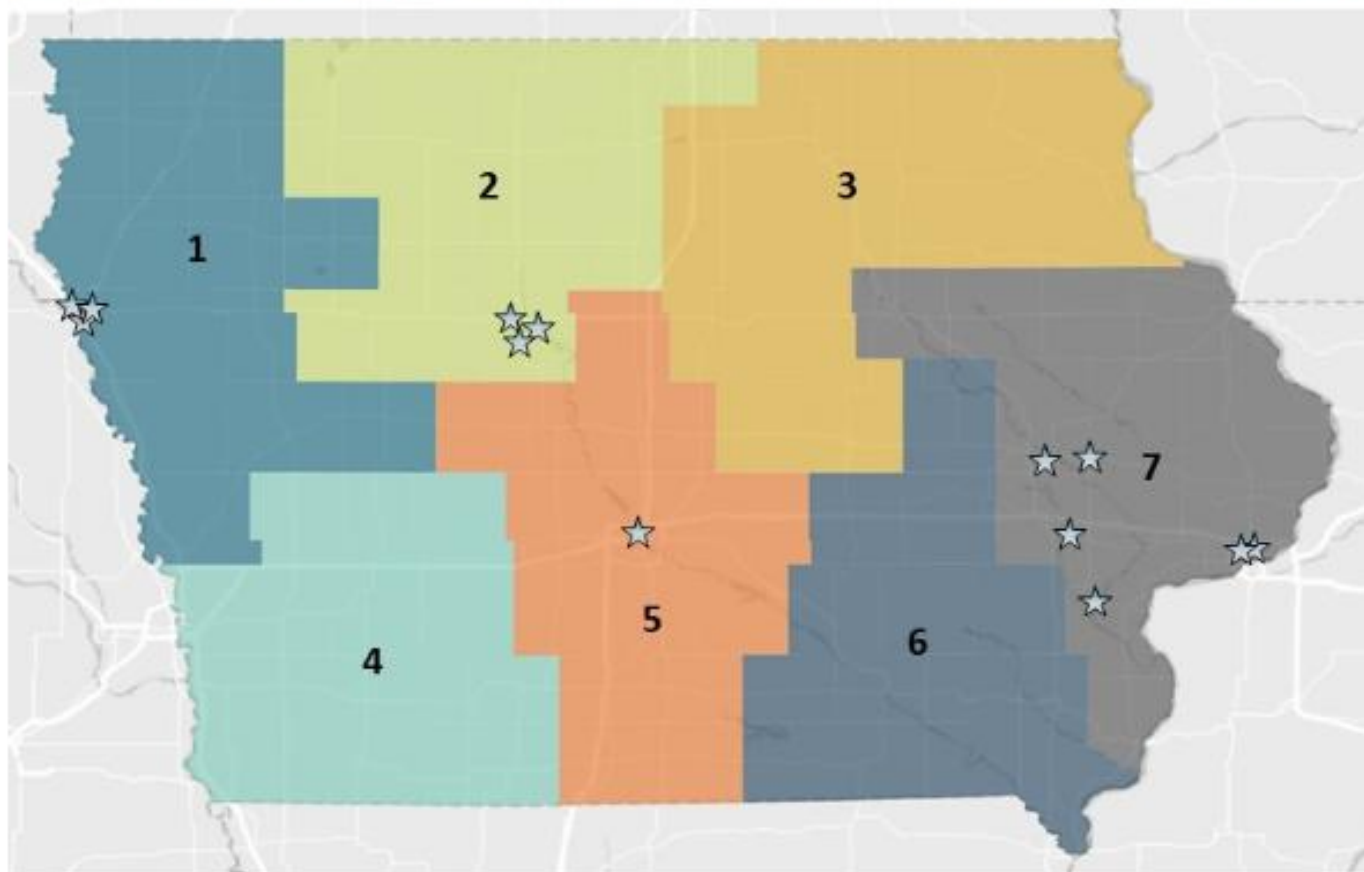
Today

Jan. 2026

Iowa has added 41 certified beds since January 2026.

There are 342 certified beds across 23 Certified Recovery Housing locations in Iowa

Recovery Housing in Iowa by Behavioral Health Districts



Note: There are 11 Recovery housing locations in the Des Moines area (District 5).

Source: Iowa HHS, Division of Behavioral Health. Map updated on August 10th, 2026.

Expanding Recovery Housing for Iowa Families

Iowa is now building on this progress by expanding recovery housing options for parents and children. In July 2026, Iowa reached another important milestone with the certification of Iowa's first recovery residence serving men and their children. Four additional programs serving women and their children are currently advancing through the NARR Level IV certification process.



Health and
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Recovery Residences serve as a safe home for individuals in all stages of recovery.

- These accomplishments reflect Iowa's continued commitment to expanding access to safe, healthy, and supportive environments where individuals and families can strengthen their recovery and build healthier futures.
- For more information or to learn more about the NARR certification process, please contact the Recovery Housing Helpdesk at recoveryhousing@hhs.iowa.gov.



Recovery Housing

Future priorities

- To increase the number of recovery houses available across the state of Iowa
- To increase the number of recovery houses available for parents and children
- To expand the levels of Recovery Housing available in Iowa

Recovery Community Centers

Mistie Parrish

Tactic 1.4:

Support and deploy environmental strategies related to supporting recovery in Iowa communities

Recovery Community Centers create community for people with behavioral health challenges, primarily focusing on the challenges related to substance use.

- They bridge the gap between treatment and daily life or offer alternative pathways for recovery
- Support individuals in building "recovery capital"
- Provide peer support and community
- Accessibility – open to anyone, no criteria to receiving support

Recovery Community Center (RCC)

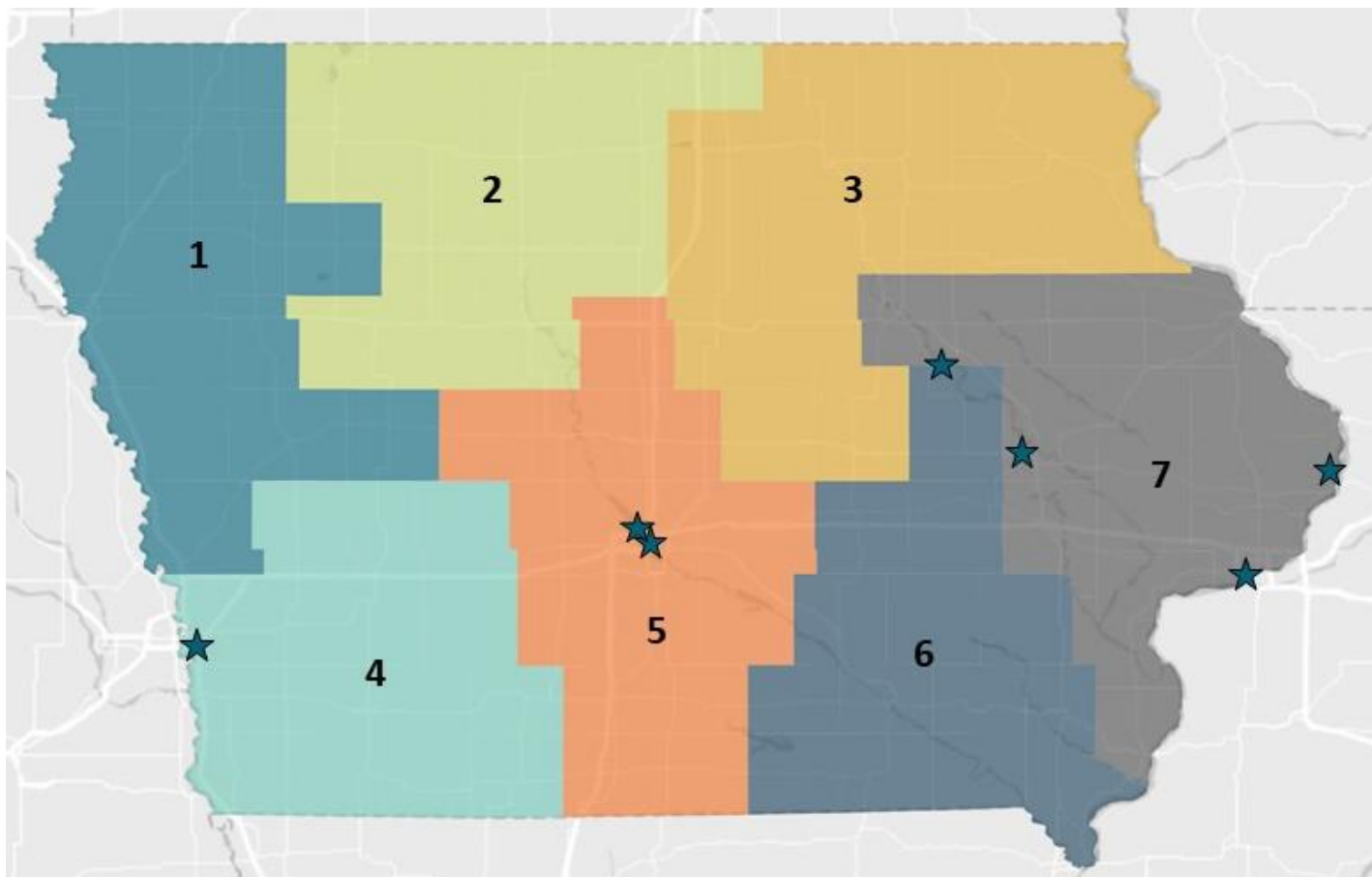
Community-based organizations providing peer support and other recovery services in a non-clinical, welcoming environment

A focus for the evolving behavioral health system as an important part of the continuum of care for service delivery

RCCs Are:

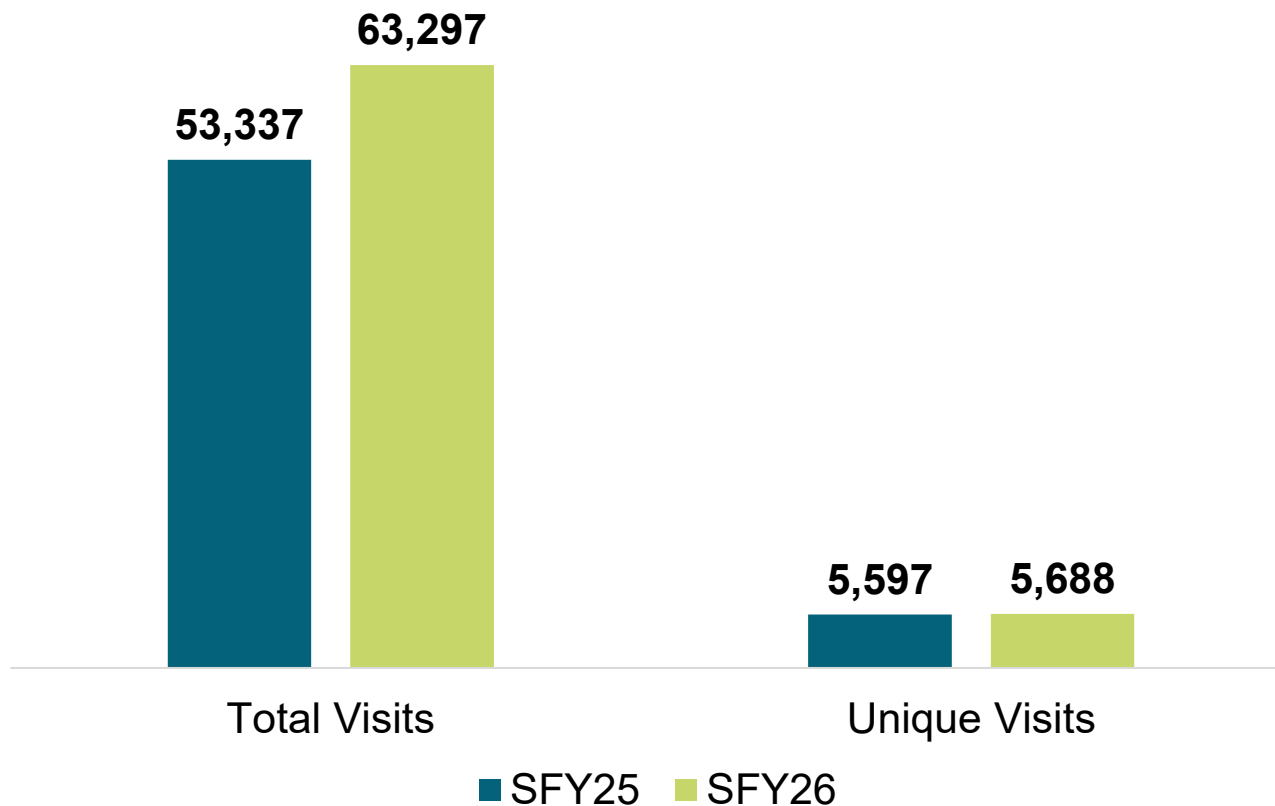
- Peer Run
- Non-Clinical
- 51% People with Lived Experience
- Volunteer Driven
- Recovery Coaching
- Leadership
- Multiple Pathways
- Education
- Community
- Advocacy

There are 7 Recovery Community Centers (RCCs) across Iowa.



During state fiscal year 2026 (SFY26), there were a total of 63,297 total visits and 5,688 unique visits to Recovery Community Centers across Iowa.

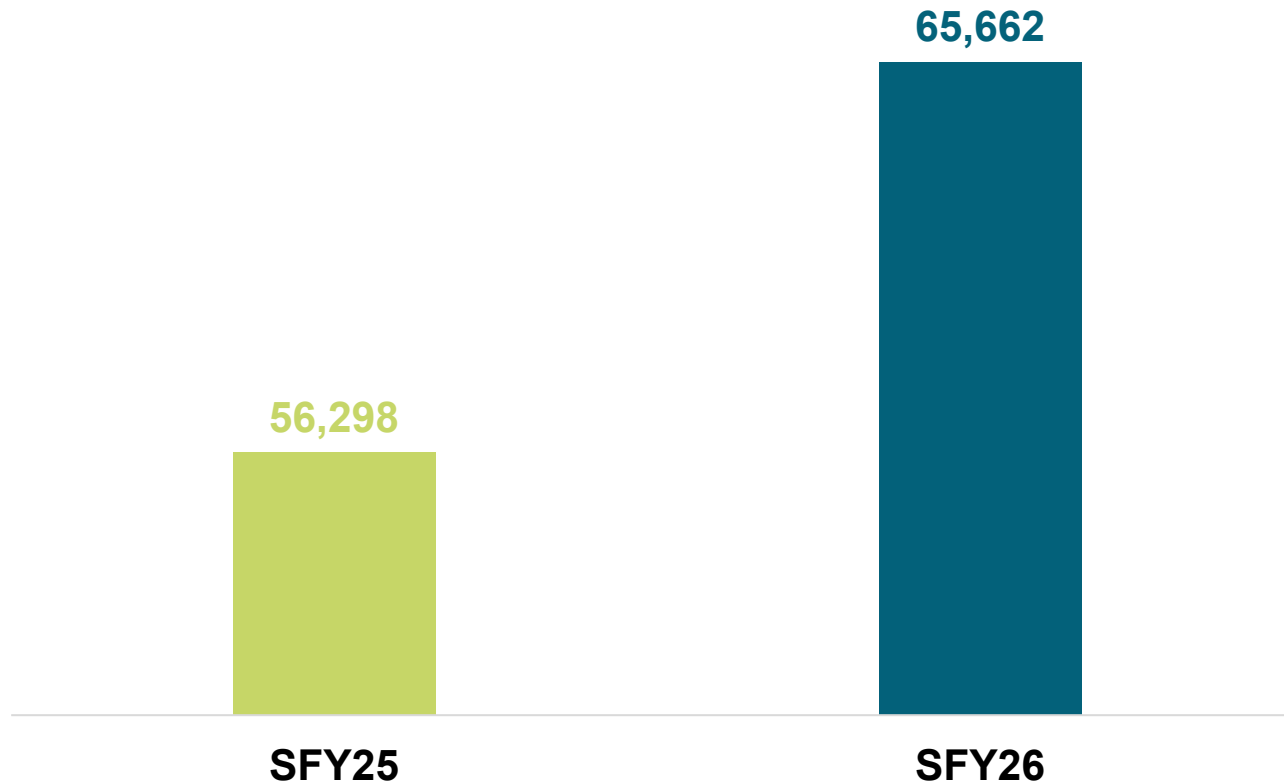
Total and unique visits for SFY25 and SFY26.



**During state fiscal year 2026
(SFY26), 65,662 individuals*
were served by Recovery
Community Centers.**

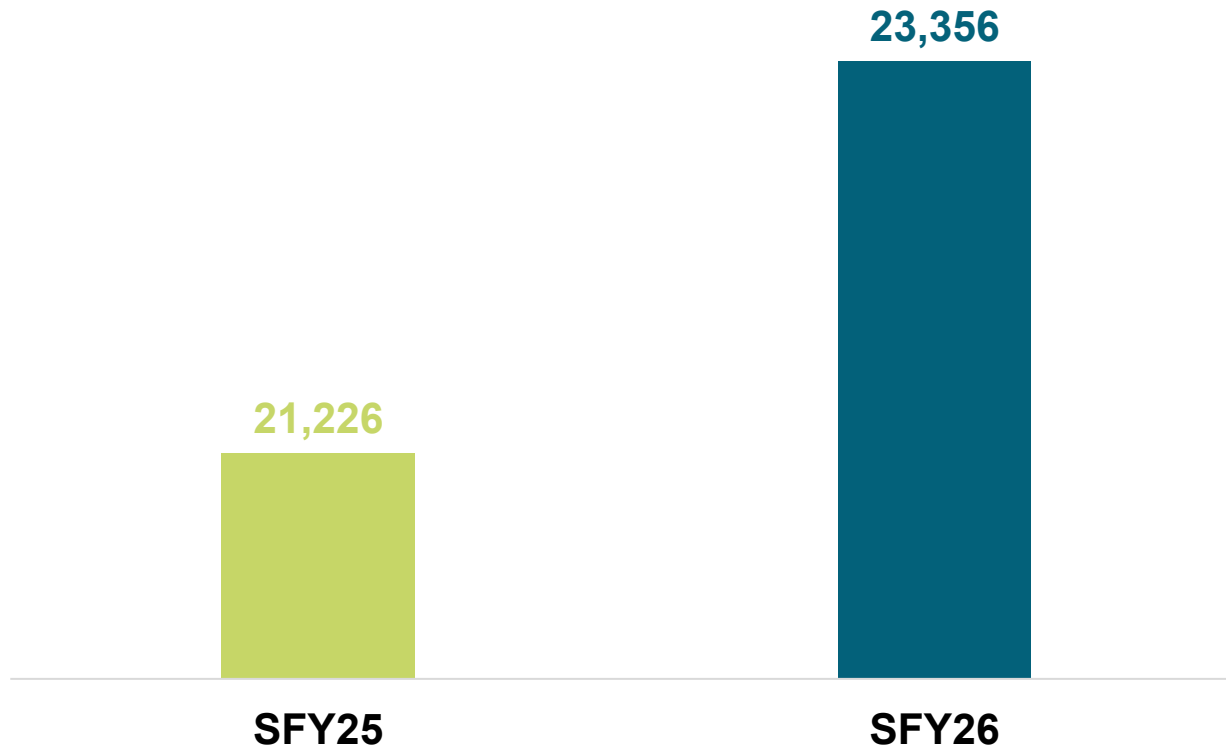
* Individuals may be counted more than once in the total number served.

Total individuals served for **SFY25** and **SFY26**.



During SFY26, there was a total of 23,356 volunteer hours carried out by Recovery Community Centers.

Total volunteer hours for SFY25 and SFY26.

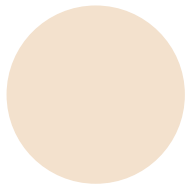


What is Peer Support?

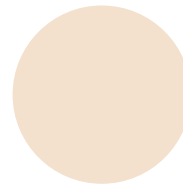
- Lived/Living Experience: Personal knowledge about the world gained through direct, first-hand involvement in everyday events rather than through representations constructed by other people



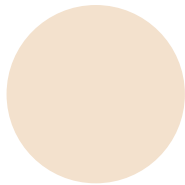
What's the Scope of Practice?



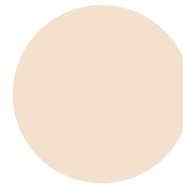
Sharing
experiential
knowledge



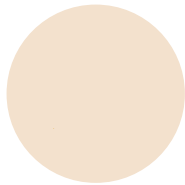
Providing
emotional
support



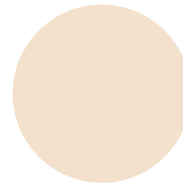
Coaching



Empowering and
advocating



Navigating
systems



Practicing ethics
and
professionalism

People Receiving Peer Recovery Support Experience:

Improved relationship with treatment providers
(Sanders et al., 1998; Andreas et al., 2010)

Increased treatment retention
(Mangrum, 2008; Deering et al., 2011; Tracy et al., 2011)

Increased satisfaction with the overall treatment experience
(Armitage et al., 2010)

Improved access to social supports
(O'Connell, ND; Boisvert et al., 2008; Andreas et al., 2010)

Greater housing stability
(Ja et al., 2009)

Expansion of Peer Services

- ▶ Outreach and Overdose Prevention
- ▶ Justice-Involved Individuals
- ▶ Rural Workforce and Settings
- ▶ Expanded SBIRTS in Hospitals
 - Increase referrals
- ▶ Increase MOUD Access
 - Partnerships
 - Mobile Unit

Recovery Community Centers

Future priorities

- To expand recovery community supports
- To expand the virtual options provided by RCCs for help and support

Family-Based Recovery

Marissa Eyanson

Tactic 1.5:

Determine how to create sustainable funding for recovery.

Problem statement: Recovery services are frequently not paid through traditional payment models (like treatment).

Need for tactical solutions to build and sustain comprehensive, integrated, statewide system focused on recovery.

Family-Based Recovery

What?

Intensive, in-home, team-based support to keep young children safe.

Treat parental substance use.

Strengthen parent-child attachment.

Building family recovery supports.

Why?

Substance use disorder affects 1 in 7 Iowans.

Over half of children entering foster care are removed due to caregiver substance use.

Remove barriers to accessing intensive care.

What is success?

Maximizing newly available funding.

Healthy parents.

Safe children.

Strong, stable families.

Recovery Strategy 2

Create and follow steps for success in building a comprehensive and integrated statewide behavioral health recovery system (page 47 BHSS Statewide Plan).

Mistie Parrish

Tactic 2.1

Iowa HHS, BH-ASO and CBOs will adopt the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)'s Working Definition of Recovery to guide Iowa HHS efforts in expanding pathways to recovery.

As a part of our efforts to build Recovery in Iowa, recovery-iowa.org was established.

This hosts a significant amount of information, including an inventory of Recovery Readiness Assessments that were used to develop Community Profiles - Recovery Iowa.

This inventory was used to gather information about what exists in Iowa communities to support individuals in obtaining recovery.

Recovery Conference

The **4th Annual Iowa Recovery Conference** brings national and local speakers together to share education and create connection for people in recovery and those who support them. It's a key event for recovery coaches, peer specialists, recovery organizations, social workers, and anyone interested in learning about current recovery efforts and hearing real stories that show recovery is possible.

- ▶ **Location:** Holiday Inn Des Moines-Airport/Conf Center by IHG
- ▶ **Date:** September 21
- ▶ **Address:** 6111 Fleur Dr, Des Moines, IA 50321
- ▶ **Phone:** (515) 267-1500
- ▶ **Register:** <https://www.regcytes.extension.iastate.edu/recovery/register/>

Recovery Strategy 3

Help recovery partners increase their behavioral health knowledge and skills.

Mistie Parrish

Tactic 3.2

Identify and address training and technical assistance needs to support retention of a skilled behavioral health recovery workforce.

[Recovery Conference](#)

[Iowa Peer Workforce Collaborative](#)

[Recoveryiowa.org](#)

[Office of Recovery Services](#)

[Center of Excellence for Behavioral Health](#)

[National Alliance on Mental Illness - Iowa](#)

[Mindspring](#)

[YourLifeIowa.org](#)

[Iowa Warm Line](#)

[Behavioral Health System Navigation](#)

Training and Technical Assistance

Future priorities

- Recovery Learning Collaborative: coming soon!
- Explore and establish how to create youth peer roles
- Expand Community Profiles (Recovery Community Index) to address the unique needs of pregnant and postpartum women for recovery
- Expand training availability for peers (Wellness Recovery Action Plan, Supervision for Peers, Ethics)

Other Noteworthy Items

Marissa Eyanson

988 Day



988 | SUICIDE & CRISIS
LIFELINE

988 Day is a Day of Action held annually on 9/8. The goal of 988 Day is to raise awareness and positive buzz about the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline through a variety of creative activities spearheaded by communities, organizations, and individuals. Visit [988 Day - 988 Lifeline](#) for ideas and resources to get involved.

988 Day: 2026 Theme

988 Reasons: Your reason is reason enough.

This theme reminds us that you don't have to be in crisis to reach out to 988. Whatever you're facing, big or small, your reason for seeking support is reason enough. Share your reason this #988Day.



September Town Hall

Iowa HHS **WILL** be hosting the September town hall despite the District Advisory Councils happening earlier that month.

September 24, 2026, 4 – 5 p.m.



Check the Iowa HHS website for a link to join: Iowa's Behavioral Health Service System | Health & Human Services (halfway down the page).



**Behavioral Health
Service System**

<https://hhs.iowa.gov/initiatives/system-alignment/behavioral-health-service-system>

Registration Now Open

Iowa Assisted Outpatient Treatment Learning Collaborative



Thursday, September 17, 2026, from 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Des Moines area (location TBD)

Participants will gain:

- ▶ A shared understanding of Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) and its potential role in Iowa's behavioral health system.
- ▶ Increased awareness of implementation models, partnerships, and sustainability strategies.
- ▶ New or strengthened cross-system connections among behavioral health, healthcare, justice, crisis, housing, and community partners.
- ▶ Practical insights from peers, experts, and stakeholders to inform future AOT planning and implementation discussions in Iowa.

Who should attend: Anyone interested in learning about or advancing AOT in Iowa, including behavioral health and healthcare providers, crisis and justice system partners, housing and community organizations, state and local leaders, individuals with lived experience, and other interested stakeholders.

FREE to attend. Learn more and register at iowapca.org/aot-collaborative.



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Questions



Visit the Recovery Iowa Website!
<https://recovery-iowa.org/about-us/>