



**ORANGE COUNTY
HIGH IMPACT OPIOID ABATEMENT
STRATEGIES**

**Funding Proposal Application Form
Application Due Date: February 21, 2025**

Applicant Agency: General Information				
Legal Name	Oxford House, Inc.			
Address	1010 Wayne Ave., Suite 300			
Type of Agency (check one)	<input type="checkbox"/> Government/ Public Authority	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Non-Profit	<input type="checkbox"/> For-Profit Business	
Telephone	301-587-2916			
Website	www.oxfordhouse.org			
Primary Contact Full Name	Kathleen Gibson			
Title	Chief Executive Officer			
Email	Kathleen.gibson@oxfordhouse.org			
Telephone	919-395-8206			
Name of Project	Oxford House Peer Advocate Program			
Total Application Funding Requested		\$ 40,000.00		
Funding Period Requested (MM/DD/YYYY)	Start Date	End Date		
	07/1/2025	6/30/2026		
Selected NC MOA Option A Strategy (Number and Name)	Recovery Support Services			
Agency Mission and Vision Statements	The mission of Oxford House, Inc. is to foster the development of Oxford Houses to provide those recovering from substance use disorder (SUD) the opportunity to live in an environment designed to support recovery without the recurrence of use.			

Use font size 12 throughout document.

As a **separate Excel file**, submit a completed **Budget Worksheet**.

Submit application to tstancil@orangecountync.gov with a subject line of – RFA: Opioid Settlement Funds – [Organization name]. Will receive Receipt of Application email upon submission. If email is not received within 24 business hours, reach out to Tonya Stancil, Harm Reduction Coordinator at tstancil@orangecountync.gov.

1. **Proposal Summary** (no more than 250 words, required but not scored)

Oxford House, Inc. (OHI) proposes to implement a Peer Advocate Program in Orange County to expand access to recovery support services for Oxford House residents with Opioid Use Disorder (OUD), co-occurring Substance Use Disorders (SUD), and mental health conditions. OHI will recruit and train four (4) experienced Oxford House residents or alumni to serve as Peer Advocates. Under the guidance of the local Outreach Worker, Peer Advocates will bridge the gap between residents and available recovery support services, helping connect them to treatment, behavioral health provider networks, and other community-based recovery resources to improve resident outcomes and housing stability.

This initiative will give particular focus to historically marginalized populations, including BIPOC, justice-involved individuals, and those with histories of homelessness. By increasing engagement with recovery support services, strengthening peer connections, and fostering long-term housing stability, this program will enhance recovery outcomes for Orange County Oxford House residents.

2. Project Narrative

- **Assessment of Community Need**

Geographic Area and Overdose Burden

Oxford House, Inc.'s proposed project will serve Orange County, North Carolina. According to the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS), between 2017 and 2021, Orange County had an opioid overdose death rate of 11.7 per 100,000 residents. During this same period, the total drug overdose death rate in Orange County was 15.0 per 100,000 residents, highlighting the broad impact of substance use disorder in the community.

Identified Gaps in Services and Need for this Work

While Oxford House provides a cost-effective and sustainable housing solution in Orange County, the ongoing opioid crisis has emphasized a growing need for further resident support, specifically increasing access to recovery support services.

The early stages of recovery are the most vulnerable period, and without adequate support, individuals are at a higher risk of returning to use. According to the *Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration* (SAMHSA), nearly 60% of individuals in treatment have undergone three or more treatment episodes, indicating a high recurrence of use rate.

To address this gap, Oxford House, Inc. proposes establishing a Peer Advocate Program in Orange County. This program will provide direct peer mentoring and access to

community-based recovery support services to individuals living in Oxford House in Orange County, helping them navigate early recovery challenges and integrate into the community.

The primary population to be served includes diverse individuals in recovery from OUD, co-occurring SUDs, and those with mental health conditions. The needs of this population have been determined through:

- **Data Analysis:** Reviewing county-level overdose trends and emergency department visits related to opioid use.
- **Community Feedback:** Experienced Oxford House residents and alumni have expressed the need for additional support in mentoring their peers to improve outcomes.
- **Lessons from the Wake County Peer Advocate Program:** Since 2007, OHI has successfully partnered with Wake County Human Services to implement a Peer Advocate Program in which Oxford House alumni or current residents mentor newcomers. This program has shown positive results in supporting long-term recovery and developing self-efficacy among residents.

Proposed Solution: Peer Advocate Program

To increase access to recovery support services in Orange County, OHI proposes to recruit and train four (4) Peer Advocates who will serve as mentors and liaisons with community-based recovery support service providers for the 25 Oxford Houses and its 210 residents.

- **Project Description and Program Sustainability** (28 points, page limit: not to exceed 3 pages).

Strategy Option A: 3: Recovery Support Services

An Oxford House Peer Advocate (OHPA) is a person who is in recovery and has lived or now lives in an Oxford House. This person has learned life strategies, how to be a self-advocate, and how to live independently and has acquired the skills to help others learn these skills as well. They differ from a counselor in that the OHPA does not tell his/her peers how to live their lives. Importantly, an OHPA offers the benefit of his/her own experiences, passing along the encouragement and support needed for others to construct their own advocacy and life strategies to achieve their desired goals. The term “Oxford House Peer Advocate” (OHPA) refers to a person who assumes the role of helping people with their contemporaries. The most prominent role of OHPA in Oxford House is meeting others in recovery individually to listen, advise, refer, and provide general support.

Some of the types of assistance given by the Oxford House Peer Advocate on an individual basis include:

1. Talking with others in recovery about their personal issues or problems
2. Exploring solutions,
3. Finding and giving resources
4. Help the new Oxford House residents identify and access the community support services they need, such as mutual aid self-help meetings, mental health providers, training, and employment providers.

Some examples would be:

1. Picking up clients from treatment and taking them to interviews
2. Sharing their Oxford House experience
3. Making Contact within 48 hours when contacted by a house.
4. Picking up a new Oxford House resident and taking them to a mutual aid self-help meeting, like 12-step meetings.
5. Helping a newcomer learn to navigate the bus system
6. Sitting in on House meetings to help resolve challenges.

OHI's timeline for project implementation is as follows:

- a. OHI will recruit and train four (4) Peer Advocates and purchase necessary recordkeeping supplies within 60-90 days of the contract's execution.
- b. OHI's field staff will assist newly recruited Peer Advocates in making initial connections with houses, ensuring their contact info is prominently displayed on Houses' information boards.
- c. OHI's field staff will meet four (4) times a year for formal training on topics related to the Oxford House Model™, Opioid Overdose Prevention & Response Training, and Mental Health & First Aid Training to assist Peer Advocates and the residents they serve in their recovery journey
- d. Peer Advocates will connect with residents on an ongoing basis, identify needs, and provide follow-up support, including connecting them to recovery support service providers.

The community needs this project because it addresses the housing insecurity for low-barrier clients seeking affordable housing and access to recovery support services for those recovering from opioid use disorder and co-occurring substance use disorders. We have observed an increase in individuals entering homes with co-occurring disorders, many of whom feel overwhelmed when navigating community resources. Peer Advocates help alleviate this challenge by providing trusted peer support and assistance in securing community-based resources that support their recovery journey. For most individuals entering our homes for the first time and finally embracing

recovery, it seems like a daunting task with little initial hope. Hard-won experience has shown that many newcomers have a better chance at recovery without returning to use if they are given additional support early on in their Oxford House experience. The Peer Advocates will provide that support by helping the resident find their path. We realize that some people need a little more help than others - that does not make one "less than" it is just a simple fact of life. Peer Advocates are not professional counselors. Peer Advocates are certified only in how to be better listeners and share their experience, strength, and hope with persons in recovery. Oxford House, Inc.'s goal has always been to provide housing for all needing safe, supported, peer-run recovery housing. The start of this program in Orange County will increase the need for more houses and empower the residents to have the recovery capital they need for continued sobriety when they are ready to move into their own homes. The Oxford House Model promotes the self-efficacy of the residents, and the Peer Advocate program enhances its viability and strength.

Oxford House, Inc. does not foresee any inability to sustain this program with Peer Advocates because it consists of alumni and current residents who continue to embrace recovery and add to their recovery capital by being involved in their community. The funding would be the only drawback as Oxford House, Inc. is a non-profit, and the Oxford Houses themselves support themselves through the Equal Expense Shared by the residents.

If this proposal is awarded, it would be the sole funding source for the Oxford House Peer Advocate Program in Orange County.

- **Equity Impact** (8 points, page limit: not to exceed $\frac{3}{4}$ page)

Oxford House, Inc.'s proposed project supports individuals already housed in Oxford Houses, many of whom are Black/African American, Latinx, Native American, Asian, LGBTQ+ individuals, justice-involved individuals, and those with histories of homelessness. These populations face systemic barriers to financial stability, employment, and healthcare, increasing the risk of housing instability and recurrence of use. Since Oxford Houses operate on a self-pay model, residents must cover their own housing costs, making financial stability and resources critical to maintaining housing. Peer Advocates will help residents overcome challenges that could disrupt their housing stability by connecting them to employment opportunities, healthcare services, and financial assistance programs.

Many Oxford House residents lack health insurance or are underinsured, limiting access to medical and behavioral healthcare. Peer Advocates will assist by: (1) helping residents find free or low-cost healthcare services, such as community clinics and sliding scale

providers, (2) providing guidance on Medicaid enrollment and public assistance programs, and (3) referring residents to organizations that offer financial assistance.

Peer Advocates will address social determinants of health by: (1) connecting residents with job training, workforce services, and employment opportunities while offering budgeting support to prevent financial instability, (2) helping residents find transportation options for medical care, work, and recovery meetings, and (3) connecting residents to recovery networks, peer support groups, and local service organizations to reinforce stability.

- **Organizational Readiness** (20 points, page limit: not to exceed 3 pages)

Financial and Grant Compliance Capacity

Oxford House, Inc. (OHI) has 34 years of experience managing federal, state, and private grants. With over 80 contracts across 31 states, OHI provides financial oversight and grant monitoring and ensures adherence to all regulatory standards.

OHI complies with OMB Uniform Guidance (2 CFR Part 200 Subpart F) for all federal grants and maintains strict internal controls to ensure responsible fiscal management of all grant awards received. The organization undergoes annual independent audits, with the most recent Single Audit conducted on June 30, 2024. To date, no findings have been reported.

Example of a Similar Project

OHI successfully manages the Oxford House Expansion & Reentry Initiative in Mecklenburg County. This program uses opioid settlement dollars to expand access to recovery housing for justice-involved adults recovering from OUD or co-occurring disorders. To date, this initiative has met all fiscal and programmatic reporting requirements, demonstrating OHI's ability to implement North Carolina county-based projects using opioid settlement funds.

Subcontractors

Oxford House, Inc. will not be using subcontractors for this project.

Capacity to Deliver Culturally Humble, Sensitive, and Appropriate Support

OHI recognizes the importance of delivering services in a culturally humble, and sensitive manner. The organization has field staff with lived experience in recovery who are trained in cultural competency and harm reduction principles. Outreach Workers receive training in cultural humility, non-judgmental engagement, and multiple recovery pathways, equipping them to support Peer Advocates in mentoring residents from

diverse backgrounds. Peer Advocates, with guidance from Outreach Workers, will assist residents in accessing external culturally relevant recovery support services, including:

- Indigenous-led healing programs
- Faith-based recovery networks
- LGBTQ+ peer recovery groups
- Medication-assisted treatment (MAT) providers

This structure allows for the residents to receive recovery support services that respect their backgrounds, experiences, and cultural identities.

History of Promoting Health and Dignity for Individuals Affected by Drug Use

OHI promotes health and dignity for individuals impacted by drug use through its democratically peer-run recovery housing model. Established in 1975, the Oxford House Model, an evidence-based best practice, has shown remarkable success in helping residents achieve long-term sobriety through peer support and access to recovery support services.

How Oxford Houses Promotes Health:

- Oxford House welcomes individuals with a wide range of health conditions, including all substance use disorders, HIV, Hepatitis C, cancer, PTSD, and other mental health challenges. Oxford House promotes inclusivity and doesn't discriminate against individuals with health conditions or limit medication use, including medication for the treatment of opioid use disorder (MOUD). NIDA-sponsored research indicates that even those with co-occurring behavioral health conditions do well in an Oxford House because they develop proper medication habits.

How Oxford House Promotes Dignity

- Oxford House promotes dignity by reducing stigma through peer support. Since the first Oxford House was established, the model has created a recovery-focused home where residents are treated with respect, not judgment. By living alongside others in recovery, residents find understanding, encouragement, and accountability rather than stigma or shame.

The self-governed structure reinforces dignity by allowing residents to take ownership of their recovery, make decisions collectively, and support each other in maintaining a safe, substance-free environment. When a resident returns to use, the focus remains on accountability and continued support rather than

punishment, ensuring that individuals are encouraged to return when stable or, if willing, return to treatment.

Through peer-driven support and a culture of mutual respect, Oxford House fosters a dignified, empowering recovery environment where individuals can rebuild their lives without fear of stigma.

Prioritized Populations

- Individuals experiencing homelessness and housing instability – OHI’s recovery housing model ensures stable, affordable, and supportive living environments for individuals transitioning from homelessness.
- BIPOC communities – Outreach efforts focus on increasing accessibility for historically underserved populations, including collaboration with culturally specific recovery support service providers.
- Individuals transitioning from correctional settings – OHI has several reentry initiatives nationwide, including North Carolina, working closely with justice system partners to facilitate placement for individuals upon release.

Through these efforts, OHI continues to foster a recovery ecosystem that prioritizes equity, inclusion, and long-term success for all recovering individuals needing supportive housing.

- **Evidence of Collaborations/Partnerships** (10 points, page limit: not to exceed 1 ¼ pages).

Oxford House, Inc. has a long history of partnerships with various agencies in the Orange County recovery community since the first Oxford House in Carrboro, North Carolina, in July 1996. Drug courts, Family courts, and parole officers refer their clients to Oxford House as an effective tool for establishing long-term recovery without a return to use or recidivism. The Orange County Local Re-Entry Council is a viable resource for consumers who have substance use disorder and mental disabilities and works with Oxford House residents, as appropriate, who are exiting or have exited the jail or the prison system. Over 75% of Oxford House residents have experienced incarceration and have succeeded in recovery. Freedom House is committed to recovery support for men and women who have substance use disorders and mental disabilities. Most Wake County Oxford House residents’ recovery journey started with detoxification at Freedom House, followed by housing at an Oxford House with continued outpatient services at Freedom House. The Community Empowerment Fund provides Oxford House residents with person-centered support, financial education, and tools for asset building. Oxford House residents utilize the services of the Interfaith Council for food, meals, and help with obtaining other necessities such as ID, birth certificates, and a place to use the computer

and have a safe place to spend time, as their hours are flexible. Oxford House residents have access to other collaborative services: the Salvation Army, the Department of Social Services for food stamps, and Vocational Rehabilitation.

The Town of Chapel Hill, the Town of Carrboro, and Orange County financially support Oxford House residents with their Equal Expense Shared (EES), or rental assistance. The proposed funding for the Peer Advocate Program will add support for Oxford House residents with mentoring access to the partnerships and resources mentioned above.

- **Performance Measures and Program Evaluation** (18 points, page limit: not to exceed 1 page)

Oxford House, Inc. (OHI), through the Oxford House Peer Advocate Program in Orange County, will use data analysis and performance metrics to track the program's impact and ensure accountability throughout the grant period.

Data Collection & Performance Metrics

OHI will collect monthly data on Peer Advocate Program participants, including:

- Resident demographics (house, race, gender, age)
- Sobriety date and move-in date
- Supportive services needed and received
- Employment status
- Any return to use and follow-up support provided

Additionally, data will be collected on Peer Advocate training activities, including:

- Number of training sessions facilitated by field staff for Peer Advocates and residents
- Resident participation and attendance in training

Evaluation & Reporting

OHI will analyze this data monthly and compile a quarterly report for Orange County, summarizing:

- Progress toward the annual goal of connecting 25 residents to recovery support services.
- The number of trainings conducted and attendance rates (One per quarter).
- Accomplishments, challenges, and program adjustments based on data insights

OHI will use these reports to refine program implementation, enhance support, and strengthen Peer Advocate training efforts. By systematically tracking outcomes, OHI will make sure the program remains effective in supporting residents' long-term recovery.

Include in the same PDF document as this form, after the Certifications section below, the following required documents. If an item is not applicable to your organization, please indicate this by an "N/A" and explain why it is not applicable.

- 3. Letters of Commitment and/or Support (Up to 5 letters)**
- 4. Latest Audited Financial Statements**, including Management letter (Attach letter of explanation if unable to provide)
- 5. Documentation of Tax Identification Number** (can be IRS Determination Letter for non-profit agencies)
- 6. Certificate of Insurance**
- 7. For non-profit agencies only:**
 - A.** IRS Determination Letter: provide a copy of an IRS determination letter which states that your organization has been granted exemption from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The organization's name on the letter must match your current organization's name and address. This IRS determination letter can also satisfy the documentation requirement of your organization's tax identification number (TIN).
 - B.** Verification of 501(c)(3) Status Form: If applicable, an Authorized Representative must annually submit verification that the organization remains a qualified 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization.
 - C.** Copy of Form 990 Federal Tax return filed for latest fiscal year.
 - D.** Agency organizational chart.
 - E.** Current Board of Directors Roster with names, addresses, office terms (with dates), and professional and/or community affiliations.
- 8. For-profit agencies only:**
 - A.** Current Board of Directors Roster with names, addresses, office terms (with dates), and professional and/or community affiliations.
 - B.** Appropriate tax form filed with IRS filed for latest fiscal year.
 - C.** Agency organizational chart.

Insert/Attach these required documents here.

9. Certifications and Required Forms

A. Application Certification

I have reviewed this application for accuracy.

I understand that Opioid Abatement funds are intended to address specific remediation activities as identified under the NC Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for the Opioid Settlement Funds.

I understand that these opioid settlement funds are subject to State laws and regulations, and I have read the MOA and agree to the requirements.

I certify that the requested funds will be used in compliance with these requirements and with all requirements outlined in the Orange County High Impact Opioid Abatement Strategies RFA.

I agree to submit invoices and other relevant documentation to Orange County to pay or be reimbursed, as well as quarterly status reports, by the date stated in the contract.

I understand that **Orange County** requires agencies with receipts less than \$500,000 that do not have a financial audit (or a financial report), prepared by a certified public accountant (CPA) to complete schedule of Receipts and Expenditures form. An agency does not need to complete this form if it has a prepared audit/report it can submit for the calendar year ending December 31, 2022 or the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023. Agencies with receipts totaling \$500,000 or more, from any source, must submit a CPA-certified financial audit.

financial statements for each year that opioid settlement funding is provided to my organization, and that Orange County may monitor the program during the award period.

Agency Authorized Official (print name)	Kathleen Gibson
Signature	
Title	Chief Executive Officer
Date	2/21/25

Board Chair/Elected Official (print name)	Jerry Conlon
Signature	
Title	Board Chair
Date	2/21/25