

### Official Proclamations

Attracting attention to your *National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month (Recovery Month)* events is an important part of this annual campaign. Having local officials participate in *Recovery Month* shows the community that key influencers support your celebration and therefore may attract more people and media attention. Asking government officials to sign a proclamation is one way to get them involved in the celebration. In 2006, more than 130 proclamations were issued in support of *Recovery Month*.

Proclamations can be issued by federal government officials, governors, state legislators, or city, county, and town officials. For the last several years, the President of the United States has issued a *Recovery Month* proclamation. The entire list of 2006 *Recovery Month* proclamations can be found by visiting [www.recoverymonth.gov/2006/proclamations.aspx](http://www.recoverymonth.gov/2006/proclamations.aspx). For previous years' proclamations, please click on the "Our Successes" link on the main *Recovery Month* Web site and select the "Highlights and Accomplishments" link.

### Official Proclamations: Credible and Effective

- **Use one of the two styles outlined below when writing your proclamation.**  
Take a look at the samples of both proclamation types included in this planning toolkit.
  - **Traditional proclamations** begin with a series of statements beginning with the word "Whereas," which means "because," "inasmuch as," or "since." The "Whereas" clauses state the issues or problems and suggest the reasoning behind the proclamation. They are followed by one phrase beginning with "Therefore," which is the crux of the proclamation and is where requests for specific support are made.
  - **Modern proclamations** have the same points as a traditional version, but are written like a letter. Both types end by proclaiming September as *National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month*.
- **Modify the templates provided in this document** by inserting information about specific substance use disorder issues in your area, such as cost issues for families and the community, as well as examples of local treatment centers for those with substance use disorders. To make use of the sample proclamation included in this planning toolkit, please visit the *Recovery Month* Web site at [www.recoverymonth.gov](http://www.recoverymonth.gov).

**Official Proclamation =**  
A public notice of the local government's support for *Recovery Month* and the need to educate the community about the financial and human costs related to substance use disorders and the value of investing in treatment.

### Tools to Help Craft and Publicize Your Proclamation

- View other proclamations on the *Recovery Month* Web site, [www.recoverymonth.gov](http://www.recoverymonth.gov), to get an idea of what to include when drafting your own.

- Craft your proclamation to reflect this year's **Recovery Month** theme, "*Join the Voices for Recovery: Saving Lives, Saving Dollars.*"
- Once you obtain a signed proclamation, post it on your own Web site with a link to the official **Recovery Month** Web site, [www.recoverymonth.gov](http://www.recoverymonth.gov).

To get your proclamation signed by a public official, please follow these steps:

- **Write your proclamation** before reaching out to government officials. This way, the official's staff member whom you contact will know what you want them to support, and the government official will have enough background information.
- **Research** the official and corresponding staff member to contact and make sure that he or she is the appropriate person to call. Pick an official who has supported treatment services and recovery or one who is willing to meet to discuss the value of investing in treatment.
- **Call** the communications office of the official three to four months before **Recovery Month** to determine the adequate time frame and process to get a proclamation signed by the official. Introduce **Recovery Month** and details about your organization's planned activities. Include details on how these are relevant to the welfare of the community.
- **Briefly convey** that you would be grateful and honored if they can participate by signing a proclamation, and explain that you already have a draft of the proclamation for them to review.
- **Follow up** often, as you might not hear from the official's office for days, or sometimes weeks, at a time. Do not hesitate to call to check on the status of your proclamation.

## Publicizing Your Proclamation

Once you secure an official to issue a proclamation, you can publicize it to maximize its usefulness for the community.

- Send copies of the proclamation to the "local" or "metro" desks of local newspapers, along with a news release announcing that a local official has signed the proclamation. Please refer to the tips on how to write a news release included in this planning toolkit.
- Organize a press conference either as part of or in addition to your other **Recovery Month** activities, where the official signs the proclamation and copies are distributed to reporters in attendance. During this media event, you can display the proclamation by having it photo-enlarged to a poster size or framed.

- Arrange a “town-hall” meeting with the official after the signing of the proclamation with a roundtable discussion featuring guest treatment providers and others who can further the message of recovery to your state’s policymakers.
- Obtain permission to display copies of the proclamation in the lobbies of public places, such as libraries and government buildings.

## Share Your Activities and Successes

You are encouraged to share your plans and activities for *Recovery Month 2007* with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s (SAMHSA’s) Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT), your colleagues, and the general public by posting them on the official *Recovery Month* Web site at [www.recoverymonth.gov](http://www.recoverymonth.gov). By sharing your planning and activities, you are helping to generate momentum, thereby increasing outreach efforts to touch millions of lives that are affected by substance use disorders.

You also can share community success stories and other outreach efforts during *Recovery Month* by completing the Customer Satisfaction Form in this planning toolkit. Instructions are included on the form.

Please send samples of your organization’s *Recovery Month* promotional materials to: Office of the Director, Consumer Affairs, SAMHSA’s Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, 1 Choke Cherry Road, Second Floor, Rockville, MD 20857.

Sample *Recovery Month* materials are available electronically at the *Recovery Month* Web site at [www.recoverymonth.gov](http://www.recoverymonth.gov). For additional *Recovery Month* materials, visit the Web site or call 1-800-662-HELP. For additional information about substance use disorders, treatment, and recovery, please visit SAMHSA’s Web site at [www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov).

### SAMPLE PROCLAMATION 1: TRADITIONAL FORMAT

**WHEREAS**, 22.2 million people in the United States have faced a substance use disorder in the past year, and all deserve to experience the many benefits of recovery; and

**WHEREAS**, treatment reduces reported job problems, including incomplete work and absenteeism, by an average of 75 percent; and

**WHEREAS**, treatment is cost effective, with some measurements showing a benefit-to-cost ratio of up to 7:1, with substance use disorder treatment costing \$1,583 per person on average and having a monetary benefit to society of nearly \$11,487 for each person treated; and

**WHEREAS**, we must recognize the financial savings associated with treatment services, and ensure that such services are readily available to those who need assistance; and

**WHEREAS**, cost and insurance present obstacles to those who need access to treatment facilities and want to re-establish their place in the community; and

**WHEREAS**, it is critical that we educate our community members and local businesses that substance use disorders are a treatable, yet serious health care problem, and by taking steps to address it, as well as provide support for the families and children of those with these disorders, we can save both lives and dollars; and

**WHEREAS**, to help achieve this goal, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, and **[name of a treatment organization in your state or region]** invite all residents of **[city or state]** to participate in ***National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month (Recovery Month)***; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, [name and title of your elected official]**, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the laws of **[name of city, state, or locality]**, do hereby proclaim the month of September 2007 as

#### ***National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month***

in **[name of city or state]** and call upon the people of **[name of city or state]** to observe this month with appropriate programs, activities, and ceremonies supporting this year's theme, ***"Join the Voices for Recovery: Saving Lives, Saving Dollars."***

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand this **[first/other day of the month]** day of September, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-second.

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Signature

**[Insert City/State or Other Official Seal]**

### SAMPLE PROCLAMATION 2: CONTEMPORARY FORMAT

As many as 22.2 million people in the United States have faced a substance use disorder in the past year, according to the latest national figures, and they deserve to experience the many benefits of treatment.

Treatment for substance use disorders has a large and meaningful impact on our community. Research shows that substance use disorders are medical conditions that can be effectively treated, just as many illnesses are treatable. Treatments for drug use disorders are just as effective as treatments for other chronic conditions, such as high blood pressure, asthma, and diabetes. Treatment is cost effective, with some measurements showing a benefit-to-cost ratio of up to 7:1, with substance use disorder treatment costing \$1,583 per person on average and having a monetary benefit to society of nearly \$11,487 for each person treated.

However, in our community alone, more than **[number]** of **[city or state]**'s residents have substance use disorders, and although treatment and other support services can guide them through recovery from this disease, only an estimated **[number]** have accessed our area's treatment centers. Cost and insurance barriers present obstacles to those who need access to treatment facilities and want to re-establish their place in the community.

It is critical to educate our community members and local businesses about the substantial benefits that investing in treatment can have, along with the toll that substance use disorders take on productivity in the workforce and on the ability of students to be productive at school. It is also important to recognize that millions of children live with at least one parent who has a substance use disorder. Many constituencies, such as employers, the justice system, and health care providers, can develop educational initiatives to help foster an understanding of substance use disorders and proactively address substance use disorders in the workplace and other environments.

We need to recognize the achievements of those who seek treatment services and celebrate their successes. Furthermore, we have to ensure that treatment services are readily available to those who need them. By raising awareness that substance use disorders can be treated just as any chronic disease is treatable, community members will provide a more supportive and productive environment. Breaking down the barriers to treatment will facilitate the recovery process for those who need treatment and will benefit our community.

For the above reasons, I am asking all citizens of **[city or state]** to join me in celebrating this September as ***National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month (Recovery Month)***. This year's ***Recovery Month*** theme, ***"Join the Voices for Recovery: Saving Lives, Saving Dollars,"*** encourages us all to learn how to help those suffering from substance use disorders receive treatment so they can contribute to our community.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, and the **[name of city, state, locality, or treatment center]** welcome your participation in ***Recovery Month***.

NOW, THEREFORE I, **[name and title of elected official]**, do hereby proclaim the month of September 2007 as

***National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month***

in **[city or state]** and encourage all residents to promote the benefits of recovery from substance use disorders and to support community treatment programs.

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Signature

**[Insert City/State or Other Official Seal]**