



There are several effective tools to use when generating awareness and support for **National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month (Recovery Month)**, and fundraising is an essential channel. Fundraising is important to a campaign's growth and sustainability for many reasons, as it helps you establish and maintain relationships with fellow organizations, provides you with resources to help others, and enables you to carry out your **Recovery Month** activities throughout the year.

Any fundraising campaign takes time and effort, but with these tips and the credibility of **Recovery Month** to guide you, you are equipped with tools necessary for carrying out your campaign. It is essential that you convey the impact that dependence on alcohol and/or drugs has on the community as a whole and illustrate how everyone can play a role in addressing the problem of addiction.

## Fundraising: Donation Sources

Nonprofit organizations can utilize several viable sources for funding. Though funds and involvement can come from an array of sources, some of the more popular ones include individuals (family, friends, and colleagues), grants, businesses, and local and state governments. Remember, when reaching out to the following popular sources of support, you are making a case for **Recovery Month**. Also, keep in mind that donations can come in different forms — money, volunteered time, supplies, etc. Your “ask” should convey a sense of urgency and indicate that your organization is efficient in its operation.

- **Grants** are typically provided by institutions that have endowments for grants, such as governments and businesses, among others. Many grants are awarded nationally, but they can be time-consuming and difficult to acquire. Securing a grant can require different types of proposals, but most proposals call for the same basic information: Project or proposal summary, body of the proposal (introduction, needs, project goals/objectives, methodology, evaluation), target sources for future funding, budget proposal, strength of project and organization, and conclusion.
- **Individuals** tend to be the greatest source of funding for nonprofits. By voicing your commitment to treatment and recovery from addiction, you can motivate members of your community to donate in support of your mission.
- **Corporations and businesses** can be a good source for supporting special events, campaigns, and projects. Often, local entities are willing to help either through staff volunteers or by contributing items such as gift certificates and specials (gift baskets, discounts), as they are also able to gain exposure from taking part in events such as **Recovery Month**. Philanthropic acts can instill pride within an organization, strengthen ties to the community, and serve as a testimony to the corporation's willingness to give back.
- **Local and state governments** are additional resources. Local governments will sometimes help fund activities that benefit communities in their areas or offer to send an official to participate. Reach out to your representatives, city council, board of supervisors, and other government entities for support.

Throughout this process, remember to think about key motivators – *What inspires an organization or individual to be a part of your **Recovery Month** movement?*

- A charitable nature and the need to be of service, a sense of satisfaction and helping a cause, an allegiance to a community's well-being, a personal connection to addiction, a belief that your organization can truly make a difference



To develop your **Recovery Month** fundraising outreach plan, create a list where you consider all prospective donors by evaluating their financial abilities and their willingness to contribute to their maximum potential. Potential donors can include community leaders, large or small businesses, or a resident in recovery with ties to other local organizations. Once you have created and assessed your list, refine it to a list of probable donors — determine how likely they are to get involved, identify any common connections and build on shared interests, and transform these potential funding sources into active donors and participants by using the tips provided below.

## Fundraising: Letters and Mailings

**Letters and mailings** can generate awareness and donations while simultaneously highlighting your involvement in **Recovery Month**. Letters can be sent to a large number of people or only to a select few. It is important to keep your audience in mind, and by making letters personal, you are able to connect and grab people's attention. When reaching out to local groups, you can link **Recovery Month** to your community by providing local statistics or quoting residents and families who have been affected by substance use disorders, treatment, and recovery.

Your action must be clear, so decide which of these three types of fundraising letters you will send to each recipient:

- **Requests for Financial Donations** – Ask the reader to respond by making a financial contribution.
- **Sponsorship Requests** – Are sent to specific individuals or businesses that may be interested in sponsorship, such as underwriting charity events. Often, this proposal offers some type of benefit to the donor, like advertising opportunities at the event.
- **Requests for Services and Goods** – Are frequently used to obtain donations that will be used as door prizes, raffles, or auctions.

### Six Tips for Making Your Letter Compelling

1. **Imagine you are writing to one person** when crafting your letter, as it will help it sound more personable.
2. **Be specific.** Briefly detail how the donation will be used and the positive results it will bring.
3. **Your letter should remain focused** on the outcome you are hoping to achieve and your message should be clearly communicated. Use descriptive words – without exaggerating – to clarify your message.
4. **Keep your letter simple** and focus on the compelling information that is relevant to your reader. It is good to include some information about your organization and why you are writing, but avoid going into great detail, as your letter should not be too lengthy.
5. **Personalize** your letter to a specific donor or group of donors by including information that is related to them, such as referencing an event they've previously been involved with.
6. **Narratives and success stories** that illustrate how your organization has helped are a successful way to get your message across. Use these examples to engage the reader, not just to showcase your accomplishments.

**Additional resources** to help you with fundraising letter-writing include:

- **The fundraising letter template** noted at the end of this document, which can be tailored to fit the tone of your mission and effort. Edit the bracketed placeholders as necessary before using the template. For an electronic version of the template, as well as other materials, visit the *Recovery Month* Web site at [www.recoverymonth.gov](http://www.recoverymonth.gov).
- **The 2006 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: National Findings**, which is published by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, is a premier source for up-to-date national trends on substance use, dependence, and treatment. It is available on the SAMHSA Web site at [www.oas.samhsa.gov/nsduh.htm](http://www.oas.samhsa.gov/nsduh.htm). This survey also includes state-related information, which is available at [www.oas.samhsa.gov/states.cfm](http://www.oas.samhsa.gov/states.cfm).

## Fundraising: Sample Events

Your organization may have opportunities to celebrate *Recovery Month* while raising money for the cause. Events can be crafted to fit your available budget and time, and can incorporate this year’s theme, “**Join the Voices for Recovery: Real People, Real Recovery.**” *Recovery Month* walks/rides/runs, proclamation ceremonies, carnivals, auctions, pancake breakfasts, and luncheons are popular community events. Other examples of local activities can include bake and garage sales, forums surrounding specific substance abuse issues and special guests, and health fairs and concerts.

**Local businesses and retailers** can be involved with your *Recovery Month* celebration. Depending on your event, local entities can serve as a sponsor, donor, or facilitator. For events such as auctions and raffles, retailers can contribute by providing prizes, products, and gift certificates. In some cases, local businesses are willing to match all or a portion of the proceeds you generate for *Recovery Month*.

Silent auctions, which make good use of local businesses and community organizations, can be incorporated with another *Recovery Month* celebration or used alone. They allow you to offer a variety of items for bid during your *Recovery Month* event. For such an event to be successful, it is important to have:

1. **A Goal** – This indicates the number of attendees and bidders you would like to have, your overall dollars raised, as well as how many auction items you want to put on display for bidding.
2. **Appealing Auction Items** – Attract attendees’ interest by having a wide variety of auction items (gift baskets, travel items, tickets to sporting events) and a **range of items at different prices**. How much would bidders be willing to spend? Consider your demographics, the type of event, and the experience others have had with fundraisers when doing this.
3. **Volunteer Support** – The number of volunteers will depend on the size of your auction, but they are vital in helping with getting the auction items donated, sorted, and displayed.

Lastly, remember that you’re not only seeking funds and donations, you’re building relationships. When reaching out to previous participants and donors, be sure to note how their participation and generosity has helped in the past and that you continue to appreciate their ongoing support in your *Recovery Month* efforts. When connecting with prospective donors and participants, you’re helping to unite them to your *Recovery Month* efforts and highlighting the appeal of being a part of such a mission. All donations and responses should be recorded; remember to follow up with a “thank you” to all donors.

# SAMPLE *RECOVERY MONTH* FUNDRAISING LETTER



[Name of Organization & Address on Letterhead]

[Date]

[Address of Donor]

Dear [Name]:

Each year [name of your organization] strives to advance the cause of *National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month (Recovery Month)*. Through our efforts, such as [name of programs], we have witnessed the effects of substance abuse and the value of treatment. Again, we are generating community support and awareness by being a part of this year's *Recovery Month* theme, "*Join the Voices for Recovery: Real People, Real Recovery.*"

Let me share with you the story of [story of someone affected by the issue or helped by your organization].

In 2006, 23.6 million people aged 12 or older needed treatment for an illicit drug or alcohol use problem and only 2.5 million received specialty treatment. We are committed to assisting those suffering from and affected by substance use disorders; we encourage people to voice their own personal stories.

[Name of organization] continues to work to help make a difference in the lives of people like [name of person listed above]. Every person affected by substance use disorders has a reason to celebrate their story and accomplishments, and they can help others who may be in need of treatment.

Persistent [support/outreach] is essential to help the nearly 21.1 million people who haven't yet received treatment for a substance use disorder.

Today, you can make difference by joining in the *Recovery Month* effort and encouraging those affected by substance use disorders to seek the treatment they need. Each [\$ amount] you send provides [specific goods/services] to [number of people].

Your contributions can positively influence the recovery community, and I hope we can count on your help! Please, be a voice and join in our efforts!

With great appreciation,

[Signature]

[Name]

[Title]