

OPIOID RECOVERY & REMEDATION FUNDS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MODEL PROCESS

Authors:

Mandi Speakman, Deputy Director, Barnstable County Department of Human Services
Kate Lena, Substance Use Prevention Program Manager, Barnstable County Department of Human Services
Sky Freyss-Cole, Facilitator and Consultant, Independent Contractor

Key Collaborators:

Town of Falmouth
Falmouth Commission on Substance Use

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction and Acknowledgements	2
Section 1: Background Information	3
Section 1.1: Opioid Settlements	3
Section 1.2: State Guidelines For Municipalities.....	3
Section 1.3: Cape Cod Regional Substance Addiction Council Recommendations	4
Section 2.1 Why Start with Community Engagement?	4
Section 2.2: Goals of Community Engagement.....	5
Section 3.1: How to Begin	5
Section 3.2: Timeline.....	6
Section 3.3: Partners	7
Section 3.4: The Workshops.....	8
Section 3.5: Sharing the Findings	9
Section 3.6: Distributing the Funds	9
Section 4: Key Takeaways.....	10
Section 4.1: It's Worth it	10
Section 4.3: Listen and Mean it	10
Section 4.4: Focus the Lens.....	11
Section 4.5: Adapting to Your Community	11
Section 4.6 An Investment	12
Section 5: Resources	12
Section 6: Appendix.....	12

Introduction and Acknowledgements

This report has been created to capture and share a pilot process of authentic community engagement in the decision-making process about Opioid Recovery and Remediation Fund settlement spending. The following describes efforts undertaken in collaboration by the Town of Falmouth, the Falmouth Commission on Substance Use, consultant & facilitator Sky Freyss-Cole and Barnstable County Department of Human Services (BCDHS).

In mid-2022, Massachusetts provided guidelines for the expenditure of municipal opioid settlement recoveries which included: incorporating community input from those directly affected by the opioid epidemic; addressing service disparities to increase access and equity in treatment and services for OUD, prevention, and harm reduction relating to opiates; leveraging existing state, city, town, and community opiate use disorder, mental health disorder, and behavioral health disorder programming and services. Municipalities were further encouraged to innovate and collaborate in developing opioid abatement fund strategies.

Barnstable County does not have a role in the distribution of funds and no rights or responsibilities to dictate how the funds are used by municipalities. Despite this, in late-2022 BCDHS began receiving a multitude of requests for guidance and technical assistance regarding how to implement the state's guidelines. In response to this need, in mid-2023 BCDHS partnered with Cape Cod's representative to the State Opioid Recovery and Remediation Fund Advisory Council and Falmouth Human Services Director to create a model practice for towns to engage stakeholders and community members impacted by substance use disorder in the decision making on how to spend ORRF settlements. The collaborative work done during this approximately nine-month process has resulted in this model practice and is being shared for the benefit of all.

For more information about the contents herein, please contact Deputy Director of Barnstable County Department of Human Services Mandi Speakman (mandi.speakman@capecod.gov, 508-470-4936).

Section 1: Background Information

Section 1.1: Opioid Settlements

On July 21, 2021 Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey announced a \$26 billion settlement agreement with opioid distributors and Johnson & Johnson, which will provide more than \$500 million to the Commonwealth and its cities and towns for **prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery** across Massachusetts. More information can be found on [the Attorney General's website](#).

This settlement holds accountable several corporations that contributed to the over-prescription of opioids in Massachusetts and brings needed relief to people struggling with substance use disorder. The settlement agreement includes pharmaceutical distributors Cardinal, McKesson, and AmerisourceBergen as well as Johnson & Johnson, which manufactured and marketed opioids. Resolutions with Walmart, Teva, Allergan, CVS and Walgreens are pending.

The settlement also requires significant industry changes that are designed to prevent this from happening again. The Attorney General's Office supports the settlement and has been laying the groundwork for its implementation in Massachusetts and has created the Opioid Recovery and Remediation Fund (ORRF). More information on ORRF can be found on the [ORRF Advisory Council website](#). Per information distributed from [the Attorney General's office](#), under the state's approved State-Subdivision Agreement, 40% of abatement funds coming into the Commonwealth under statewide opioid settlements will be allocated to the state's municipalities. 60% of the abatement funds will be allocated to the Opioid Recovery and Remediation Fund to further be dispensed into the community through Department of Public Health grants. Municipalities that completed the Subdivision Settlement Participation Form by March 31, 2022, and agree to use the payments to abate the opioid crisis in their communities will be receiving a portion of the settlement funds directly in the form of annual payments through 2038.

Section 1.2: State Guidelines For Municipalities

According to the State-Subdivision Agreement, abatement funds allocated to municipalities shall be used to implement the strategies set forth below. Municipalities are encouraged to pool abatement funds to increase their impact, including by utilizing the [Office of Local and Regional Health's \(OLRH\) Shared Service infrastructure](#). Municipal abatement funds shall not be used to fund care reimbursed by the state, including through MassHealth and the Bureau of Substance Addiction Services (BSAS), although local or area agencies or programs that provide state-reimbursed services can be supported financially in other ways that help meet the needs of their participants. The sectors in which settlement funds may be spent include:

1. Opioid Use Disorder Treatment
2. Support People in Treatment and Recovery
3. Connections to Care
4. Harm Reduction
5. Address the Needs of Criminal-Justice-Involved-People
6. Support Pregnant or Parenting Women and their Families, Including Babies with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome

7. Prevent Misuse of Opioids and Implement Prevention Education

See Appendix A for expanded guidelines for municipal funding put forth by the Attorney General's office.

Section 1.3: Cape Cod Regional Substance Addiction Council Recommendations

The purpose of the Regional Substance Addiction Council (RSAC) is to establish a communication infrastructure across towns, providers, organizations, and individuals on Cape Cod. This allows us as a region to identify and address gaps and disparities in the service system, maximize interagency collaboration and to maximize funding and resource opportunities. Barnstable County will have a coordinated and comprehensive regional approach to substance use across the continuum of prevention, treatment, intervention, and recovery. After many meetings with the group, a list of general recommendations was developed as follows:

1. Pool funds and collaborate with area municipalities
2. Involve people impacted by substance use disorder in the conversation of how to spend the funds, ie: people in recovery, people who are actively using substances, family members, town substance use coalitions
3. Create evidence-based plans for spending
4. Spend funds on substance use-related projects that will directly impact people with substance use disorder and their loved ones

Section 2: Community Engagement

Section 2.1 Why Start with Community Engagement?

Decades of research shows us the importance of community engagement, especially in the public health field. The World Health Organization defines community engagement as “a process of developing relationships that enable stakeholders to work together to address health-related issues and promote well-being to achieve positive health impact and outcomes”¹. Addiction, opioid use, and overdose are deeply personal topics and issues that require the input and buy-in of community members in the development of programs and spending of funds.

Focusing on community engagement ensures that important decisions will not be made in a vacuum. Because the settlement funds will be distributed over many years, engaging those who are most impacted by the opioid epidemic is an investment in the long-term value these funds can have in our community. It may be tempting as town staff members or elected officials to take on the decision-making of how funds will be utilized yourselves, but we suggest that it is far more useful if you shift the perspective of your role away from expert, and toward convener. There is great value in asking ourselves, *How might we ask the questions and hold the space for conversation so that we may amplify the voices of those most affected?*

¹ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). *Community Engagement: An Essential Component of an Effective and Equitable Substance Use Prevention System*. SAMHSA Publication No. PEP22-06-01-005. Rockville, MD: National Mental Health and Substance Use Policy Laboratory. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2022.

Taking this process approach results in more community buy-in, stronger relationships, and a longer-lasting impact of the efforts put forth. We all have experience working on projects where there was tremendous effort up front, plans were made, and proposals were delivered. And only after the fact, were the results shared with others for feedback and input. In some cases, waiting to gather this input at the end might have delayed the project, or in other cases, completely derailed it. Often it can necessitate going completely back to the drawing board.

Taking the time at the start to listen and centralize community voices in this effort can lead to initiatives unfolding more smoothly down the road. We go slowly at first, so that we may move with more speed in the future. We lay a foundation. In the case of the opioid abatement fund process, the foundation is based on real perspectives from community members and not just leaders telling the community what they need. "Nothing about us without us" is a slogan from the ADA advocacy community that has been adopted within the recovery community. It communicates the idea that no policy should be decided by any representative without the participation of members of the groups affected by that policy.

Section 2.2: Goals of Community Engagement

1. To engage with the community, increasing awareness around settlement funds and other town opportunities for involvement
2. To involve people with substance use disorder and other lived experience in decision-making processes
3. To be as inclusive as possible
4. To be thoughtful and intentional with the process and to not create more harm for community members

Section 3: Process

Section 3.1: How to Begin

When designing a community engagement process to determine the best use of your town's settlement funds, there is no one-size-fits-all approach. The insights in this document are drawn from a process conducted in Falmouth, MA in 2023, with similar efforts now being tailored to the unique needs of Barnstable and Sandwich, MA. We offer these learnings to support other communities in Barnstable County and beyond as they navigate similar decisions.

A successful community engagement process is one that is built upon curiosity, collaboration, and the willingness to adapt and learn as you go. Whether you work with an external facilitator/consultant or not, we suggest beginning with reflecting upon and answering a series of strategic questions and continuing to keep these questions in mind as you go:

- *Why are we doing this? Always start with the why. Get very clear on the need, your purpose, and intent.*
- *Who are the players? Who is most impacted? Who are the decision-makers? What groups are established in our community? Who is not currently sitting at the table and why not? Who are the individuals and groups we want to make every effort to invite and include?*
- *What are we hoping to achieve? What does success look like?*
- *What structure and process best supports the above?*

- *Who's missing? What's missing? What assumptions might we be making? How can we adapt and improve?*

Section 3.2: Timeline

In Falmouth, the process of developing a plan for community engagement was not a linear one. It took many months and an acknowledgment that they would be “building the plane while flying it” to begin making headway. While guidance and support from the State level has increased over time, at the start it can be daunting to figure out how to approach this opportunity. In Falmouth, many conversations were had before the blank canvas in front of them started to take shape. Engaging with an external facilitator and exploring the framing questions above led to a structure and process that was ultimately mapped to the following timeline:

MONTH(S)	ACTION(S)
MARCH-Month (1)	Form a Design Team
APRIL-Month (2)	Align around goals and general process overview, Coordinate with the Advisory Group
APRIL/MAY-Months (2-3)	Stakeholder analysis, Design, Communication/Outreach and Planning for the first workshop
JUNE-Month (4)	Host a large public multi-stakeholder “World Café”-style facilitated workshop to gather community input and share information
JUNE-Month (4)	Debrief the workshop
JULY/AUGUST-Months 5-6)	Identify Community Co-hosts and Plan for smaller group sessions
SEPTEMBER-Month (7)	Hold five focus group sessions within the community
SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER-Months (7-8)	Gather and synthesize input, Prepare for sharing with project participants
OCTOBER-Month (8)	Hold a “Reflecting Back” session for all participants to update them to share what was gathered and to provide an opportunity for additional feedback before the preparation of a final summary/report
NOVEMBER-Month (9)	Final synthesis and presentation to Select Board
NOVEMBER-Month (9)	Design Team Debrief and Project Wrap-up

Section 3.3: Partners

This effort was led by the Town of Falmouth's Human Services Department and Commission on Substance Use (FCSU) in partnership with the Barnstable County Department of Human Services (BCDHS). The Commission operates with 5 appointed members. The mission of the Commission is: *"To prevent substance abuse among Falmouth's citizens, provide information and education to the community, and to promote the development and availability of a continuum of substance abuse services for all Falmouth residents."*

The Commission also has a diverse and committed Advisory Group whose members participate regularly in Commission meetings and who have been an important part of Falmouth's opioid abatement fund community engagement effort. Many of the Advisory Group members are individuals in recovery, loved ones of individuals with Opioid Use Disorder and/or service providers in the community.

The Falmouth Human Services Department works closely with the Commission and its Director, who also served as the Cape Cod Representative to the State Opioid Recovery and Remediation Fund Advisory Council, serves as the liaison between the two. *"Since 1975 the Town of Falmouth's Human Services Department has been supporting and empowering Falmouth residents and strengthening the community as a whole through advocacy, broad community participation, and ensuring access to a comprehensive range of community-based health and human services."*

In order to work efficiently and effectively, a Design Team was formed to oversee and guide the Falmouth opioid abatement fund process. This team was made up of the Chair of the FCSU, the Director of Human Services/Cape Cod representative to the state Opioid Recovery and Remediation Fund Advisory Council, and the Barnstable County Substance Use Prevention Program Manager. The Design Team also included two community members with lived experience and strong personal and professional connections in the recovery community who provided their insights and participated in planning meetings as their schedules allowed. They were especially involved in community outreach and helping to illuminate any blind spots in the planning process.

Falmouth hired consultant/facilitator, Sky Freyss-Cole to help design the overall project and to lead the engagement sessions. Freyss-Cole worked very closely with the Design Team members to plan and carry out each step along the way. Choosing to hire an external consultant allowed the Design Team, Commission, and Advisory Group members to be able to participate in the process and/or observe, depending on the need at any given time. Freyss-Cole's expertise in process design combined with Design Team members' subject matter expertise and local knowledge resulted in a solid and effective team effort.

This work is deeply valuable, and it can be quite time-consuming. It is important to set expectations clearly about the commitment it will take and also to right-size the ask for the individual. Be flexible and accommodating where you can be while also maintaining consistency and moving the process forward. Some of the folks involved will be doing so as paid employees, others will be volunteering their time and participating outside of their work schedule and other commitments. In order to make sure that you are engaging all key voices in the planning process, be mindful of this as you schedule meetings and form teams. Also know that you may need to make adjustments along the way. This was the case in Falmouth, and it was very helpful to have various opportunities for folks to be involved and share their insights as the process was being designed.

Section 3.4: The Workshops

Community Workshop

The first workshop held was a large multi-stakeholder community gathering structured around the [World Café](#) format. Participants representing all different stakeholder groups within the community participated in a series of rounds of conversation to share how they, and the community, have been impacted by the opioid epidemic. Together they identified what was working in terms of responding to the opioid epidemic in Falmouth as well as what was missing and what the priorities were moving forward. This three-hour workshop was held on a weekday evening. It was well attended and contributed a great deal of insights and energy to the overall community engagement initiative.

Focus Groups

Following the community workshop, focus groups were held. Based on learnings from the first gathering, the Design Team identified groups whose voices they thought needed to be heard and/or amplified. For example: Parents in recovery or seeking recovery from Opioid Use Disorder, Loved ones who have lost someone to Opioid Use Disorder, Family members of those in active addiction and in recovery, Falmouth Black, Indigenous and People of Color impacted by the Opioid Epidemic, Falmouth Schools staff and administration and Young people in recovery or impacted (24 and under). Falmouth started by hosting five groups, knowing that it would be a work in progress and that they could continue to reach out to additional folks as needed and as they were able. It was challenging in some cases to bring a group together. The outreach took great effort and partnering with community members was essential. The focus groups were held in venues that were inviting and easily accessible. Each session was hosted in collaboration with a Community Co-Host: a member of the Falmouth Community who was also a member of the group to be gathered. This individual helped to reach out to potential participants and supported the effort. The facilitated sessions were two hours long and provided ample time for arriving, sharing experiences and input, and for decompression and connecting at the end.

Reflecting Back Session

Once the information gathered from the community workshop and the focus groups had been compiled, a Reflecting Back Session was held. Folks who had participated in any of the previous sessions were invited to join. Commission members and Advisory Group members were also in attendance. During this workshop, the Design Team shared both the raw data collected thus far as well as a summary of key themes. They invited everyone present to share their feedback. This provided further input for the Commission and Advisory Group to incorporate in the final synthesis phase of the project.

Working Sessions with FCSU and Advisory Group

In preparation for presenting to the Falmouth Select Board, Sky Freyss-Cole facilitated two working sessions with the Falmouth Commission on Substance Use and the Advisory Group so that they could hone in on their key messages and next steps. These sessions allowed all Commission and Advisory Group members to fully participate and discuss the content gathered during the community engagement process. Together they were able to align around how they would move forward with establishing the structures and parameters for the distribution of settlement funds in Falmouth.

Section 3.5: Sharing the Findings

Report to the Select Board

In November the Human Services Director and the FCSU presented their summary of the [community engagement process](#) to the Falmouth Select Board. Throughout the process, the Design Team valued transparency and wanted to include and inform the Falmouth Community. This presentation was a culmination of those efforts. Themes gathered during the community engagement process were shared as well as insights and learnings gained along the way. The Human Services Director and the FCSU proposed how they would move forward, guiding the process of the distribution of abatement funds. The Select Board was invited to share feedback and questions.

Section 3.6: Distributing the Funds

Getting the money out into the community

Once the FCSU presented the findings of the community engagement process to the Town of Falmouth, the Department of Human Services continued to work together with the FCSU to design the process for how the Opioid Settlement Funds would be distributed. A great deal of thought was put into the creation of the application and the review process for those applications. It was decided to issue one-year grants of up to \$25,000 with an option to renew for two additional years. The applications and supporting information can be found on the Opioid Abatement Funds subpage of the [Town of Falmouth website](#). The Human Services Director then convened a five-member Opioid Abatement Working Group, which included representatives of the Commission. They were tasked with the application review process and are moving forward with both the state guidance on appropriate areas of funding as well as rich community input put forward by the voices of those most impacted by the epidemic.

Getting to this point in the process has required a tremendous amount of work and dedication from both town employees and volunteers in Falmouth. Falmouth's existing capacity in Substance Use work, and the ability to quickly engage an identified group, allowed for an efficient process. For communities without existing capacity, establishing a Commission on Substance Use may be an option. Alternatively, communities may explore departments or public bodies already established who may best assume these responsibilities. Recognizing that these funds will be distributed over many years, it is important to consider where best to assign these duties to best serve the interests of your community. Who should be seated at the table guiding decisions? How can you do everything possible to continue to ensure that the voices of those most impacted are represented?

Another consideration as you move towards this phase in the process is how you plan to check back in with your community periodically. With the funds being distributed through 2038 it will be important to consider how you will remain responsive to your town's needs as time goes on. There will surely be challenges and hurdles along the way. Build into your process plenty of opportunities for capturing learnings and course correcting. Set the expectation with yourselves and others that you will be asking regularly: *Are we on track? Do we need to make adjustments? Have there been any new developments we need to consider? What are the voices of our community saying now? Is it time for another conversation?*

One thing that is wonderful about taking this type of approach in your town is that you are building a foundation of relationships and a process around how you can talk about this crisis. That way, if parts

and pieces of these efforts need to be replicated in the future to ensure the funds are being allocated in the most valuable ways, you have some solid experience and connections to build upon. This is designed to be an approach that supports learning and building capacity for having these conversations in your community. The impacts stretch far beyond the information you gather.

Section 4: Key Takeaways

Section 4.1: It's Worth it

The experience had in Falmouth was rich in learning. The first of the takeaways was that it's worth it. Facilitating a community engagement process takes a significant investment of time, energy, human, and financial resources. However, without that investment, the ultimate decision-makers in Falmouth would have had little to back up their recommendations or decisions related to the distribution of funds. Not only did the process result in data that could be shared and utilized, it resulted in a richness of connection and strengthened relationships within the community of those most impacted by Opioid Use Disorder and committed to creating positive change. This work centers the opioid crisis and follows the abatement strategies best practices and guidelines:

- Incorporate community input from those directly affected by the opioid epidemic.
- Address service disparities to increase access and equity in treatment and services for OUD, prevention, and harm reduction relating to opiates.
- Leverage existing state, city, town, and community opiate use disorder, mental health disorder, and behavioral health disorder programming and services.

The process in Falmouth will be ongoing and the FCSU and Town of Falmouth are committed to learning and adapting along the way.

Section 4.2: Be Inclusive

Throughout the community engagement process, the FCSU members heard folks sharing about how in the past people had not been asked for their input or hadn't been included. Those individuals felt this experience represented a shift in the Town's approach and were grateful to be heard. The importance of including the voices of the community and those with lived experience in this process cannot be stressed enough. Also, beyond simply engaging those with lived experience in conversation, look at the makeup of your advisory groups and decision-making bodies. *How many people at the table have been impacted by OUD? How much of your community's lived experience is represented?* We recognize that in this type of work we must expect a certain level of incompleteness. At the same time, while there is no way to reach every individual and stakeholder group there is immense value in putting forward the effort and determination to do so.

Section 4.3: Listen and Mean it

This is extremely important work. When we open up the conversation, it is crucial that we truly listen and do the best we can to represent the wishes of our communities. It is our responsibility to make sure we're honoring the needs and perspectives of those who have spoken up. This is one way to

authentically support those who are impacted. The state, municipalities, and stakeholders want to ensure that these dollars are put to work in ways that are deeply effective and reflective of what's been learned.

Section 4.4: Focus the Lens

One aspect of this work that proved to be somewhat daunting is that many of the needs presented are larger than the town of Falmouth. And while the town is receiving funds, some of the needs that have surfaced take much larger amounts of money to be adequately addressed. That's a challenge. The Commission found itself grappling with the following questions: How do we understand what our limitations are and how *do we acknowledge and value those limitations? In addition, how do we better understand our opportunities?*

Educator and author, [Stephen Covey](#) speaks in his work about circles of influence and circles of concern. Creating awareness around these different areas can lead to proactive behavior instead of simply reacting to areas where one may have little control. The FCSU used this framework to explore what the vast concerns were, what they might have direct control over, as well as where they may be able to focus in order to exert and expand their influence. In areas where the town doesn't have direct control, they are thinking about how they can [mobilize their community, and their voices so that they can be a part of the greater conversation](#).

Section 4.5: Adapting to Your Community

You may be reading this and thinking "We don't have the resources to conduct a large half-year community engagement process". That is ok, this is not a one-size-fits-all solution. This model is being offered as a source of inspiration and information to help communities create the bespoke process that works for them. However, the principles remain applicable. Listen, reach out to those who are most impacted. Do not make decisions in a vacuum or behind closed doors. Include voices of members of your community who have lived experience in every step of the process. They are the experts. Pay attention to what they have to say and take care in the way you ask and how you listen. Perhaps hold one workshop at first and then reassess to see what more you can do. See this as an opportunity to be responsive to your community. Get curious and think about this as an ongoing effort to learn, respond, repair, and improve.

As you begin engaging your community, be mindful of the fact that neighboring towns will likely be doing something similar. This is ever more reason to make the process your own. Know that as you host individuals with lived experience, service providers, community groups, elected officials, local activists, and other concerned citizens, that there may be some overlap between what you are inviting them to engage in and what they have participated in with other nearby towns. It is important that each community intentionally reflects about this topic and gathers input about how these funds should be allocated. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge that Opioid Use Disorder and its impacts are not limited to town boundaries. Acknowledge who is in the room, and what conversations they may have been a part of already and again, make sure that your community engagement process reflects your town and its needs.

The amount of Opioid Abatement funds distributed varies greatly by town. Because of this and in order to maximize the impact, rural towns may consider partnering up with neighboring communities to

pool resources. It is encouraged to explore all possibilities and to open up the Opioid Abatement Funds conversation not just within your town but also within your area, region, and county.

Section 4.6 An Investment

Engaging our communities in meaningful conversation about the impact of the opioid epidemic and identifying what is working and where the gaps are, is worth the effort it takes. As municipal employees and representatives, it is our responsibility to allocate these funds wisely. What better way to inform that process than together, in collaboration with our community members? This is a transparent, inclusive, and effective way to meet the needs of those we serve. Taking this approach requires a commitment of time, energy, and financial resources. Ultimately, we see this as a long-term investment in those from whom the opioid epidemic has taken so much and an investment in our future.

Section 5: Resources

CARE MASSACHUSETTS: THE OPIOID ABATEMENT PARTNERSHIP:

<https://www.caremass.org>

Care Mass provides resources and technical assistance to help communities implement public health strategies that are both impactful and equitable.

GUIDANCE FOR MUNICIPALITIES UTILIZING OPIOID SETTLEMENT ABATEMENT PAYMENTS:

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/guidance-for-municipalities-utilizing-opioid-settlement-abatement-payments>

- [Regional Community Engagement Assistance](#)
- [Statewide Opioid Settlement Recoveries](#)
- [Guidelines for Expenditure of Municipal Opioid Settlement Recoveries](#)
- [Municipal Abatement Funds & State Procurement Laws](#)
- [Chapter 77 Acts of 2023 – Opioid Settlement Receipts](#)
- [Statewide procurements for opioid-related programs and services](#)
- [Reporting Requirements for Municipalities](#)
- [Municipal Opioid Settlement Funding Expenditure Dashboard](#)
- [Additional Resources](#)

LEARN ABOUT THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S STATEWIDE OPIOID SETTLEMENTS WITH OPIOID INDUSTRY DEFENDANTS:

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/learn-about-the-ags-statewide-opioid-settlements-with-opioid-industry-defendants>

Section 6: Appendix

- A. Sample Agendas:
 - a. Community Workshop sample agenda
 - b. Focus Group sample agenda
 - c. Reflecting Back Session sample agenda
- B. Falmouth Opioid Abatement Funding Application

Appendix: Sample Agenda Guide

The following are sample agendas for the Community Workshop, the Focus Groups, and the Reflecting Back Session that were held in Falmouth. It is not recommended to lead a process or workshop solely using sample agendas. It is important to make the experiences your own and to design them in a way that best serves your community. These sample agendas are meant to serve as inspiration for possible starting points. What is most important is thoughtfully exploring the format, process, questions, and approach that will best serve your community and your specific needs.

On a more practical note, when hosting these events, we recommend using spaces that are inviting, easily accessible, well-lit, and spacious. We recommend providing food/refreshments at all gatherings. If the resources are available, you might also consider offering payment and/or gift cards as an appreciation for participation.

ORRF Community Workshop Sample Agenda			
START TIME	DURATION	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION/TALKING POINTS
3:30	1 hour 45 minutes	Workshop organizers/hosts arrive and set-up	Set-up the space. Round tables spread out with approximately 5-6 chairs at each. Welcome table for sign-in. Projector and screen for slides. Food/refreshments table. Resources table.
5:15	15 minutes	Welcome early arrivals	Folks may start arriving a little early. Have welcome table prepared by 5:15.
5:30	12 minutes	Sign-in and arrival	Sign in. Make sure to share email address if you want to be kept in the loop. Get a nametag (first names only). Grab some bites, find a seat.
5:42	18 minutes	Welcome and introduction	Welcome and introductions: – Thank you for coming. – Why we're here and why we've invited you. – Some info about the funds, our overall process, the focus groups, today we are sharing about impact as well as identifying what's working and what the gaps are. – We invite you to share honestly, any notes captured this morning will be unattributed. – Set the tone (Be mindful of biases. We're not here to blame. We're not here to debate. Our focus tonight is on how you and our community has been impacted vs. "this is how I'd use this money".) – Include: Who your hosts are. Invite all organizers to stand up. Please take care of yourself and ask for support if needed.
6:00	5 minutes	Participant Introductions: Who is in the room and why?	Turn to your neighbor, introduce yourselves: – Why did you commit the time and energy to being here this evening? Why did you say yes? A way to settle into the room, everyone engaged but not having to share publicly.
6:05	8 minutes	Plenary share	Get a sense of who is in the room. A few volunteers to share their voices in the whole group.
6:13	5 minutes	Process introduction	Share an overview of the process and how folks will be engaging in conversation this evening.

6:18	18 minutes	Café Round One: How have you been impacted by the opioid epidemic and/or how have you seen our community be impacted?	Key takeaways are captured.
6:36	8 minutes	Share, switch and recap	Captured notes are gathered by the facilitator at the end of the recap.
6:44	18 minutes	Café Round Two: In terms of how we respond to the opioid epidemic here in Falmouth: What's working well now? What has worked well in the past?	Key takeaways are captured.
7:02	8 minutes	Share, switch and recap	Captured notes are gathered by the facilitator at the end of the recap.
7:10	18 minutes	Café Round Three: – Part 1: Reflect on the conversations you've had so far. What's missing? Where are the gaps? – Part 2: What hasn't been said? What needs to be named now?	Key takeaways are captured.
7:28	8 minutes	Share, switch and recap	Captured notes are gathered by the facilitator at the end of the recap.
7:36	15 minutes	Break	Invite folks to get more food, use the restroom, and get some fresh air.
7:51	14 minutes	Café Round Four (return to your last table): What is staying with us? What do we want to be sure to carry forward from this conversation?	The synthesis round. So what? What are we taking with us? Capture takeaways in the provided template.
8:05	10 minutes	Report Out	One minute from each table. Making collective meaning and surfacing themes.
8:15	5 minutes	Capture any additional reflections	Capturing those themes and personal reflections on a flip chart.
8:20	8 minutes	Wrap-up, Next steps, Upcoming opportunities to engage, Thank you	– Let folks know there are multiple ways to be heard. – There is a suggestion box at the sign in table, invite them to share their email addresses so that they can receive a follow-up feedback form and additional information throughout the process.
8:28	2 minutes	Check-out	Ask folks to capture on a post-it note one word that summarizes this experience for them. Have them place it on a flip chart as they leave.
8:30		End/Clean-up	

ORRF Focus Group Sample Agenda			
START TIME	DURATION	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION/TALKING POINTS
4:45	30 minutes	Set up the space	Facilitator, Design Team Representative and Community Co-host arrive and set-up.
5:15	15 minutes	Early arrival	Participants may arrive early. Be ready to welcome them into the room.
5:30	10 minutes	Welcome and introduction	Thank folks for coming. Share the purpose of the meeting and the agenda for your time together.
5:40	15 minutes	Check-in round	Invite folks to share their names and what brought them here this evening.
5:55	15 minutes	What's working well? What has worked well in the past?	Break folks into small groups to discuss and then share back in the plenary to capture output.
6:10	15 minutes	What's missing? What's not working well?	Mix up the small groups, discuss and share back in the plenary. Capture output.
6:25	10 minutes	Break	
6:35	10 minutes	What would you like to see more of?	If there is time, ask folks to focus in on what they would highlight.
6:45	10 minutes	Check-out: What's staying with you?	Have participants reflect upon what's staying with them from this session.
6:55	5 minutes	Wrap	Thank folks for coming. Share information about what's happening next in the process. End the conversation well.
7:00	30 minutes	Open Space/Decompression time	
7:30		End	

ORRF Reflecting Back Session Sample Agenda			
START TIME	DURATION	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION/TALKING POINTS
5:00	30 minutes	Design team and advisory group members arrive for set up	Set-up room, refreshments etc.
5:30	10 minutes	Sign-in and arrival	Sign in, make sure to share email address if you want to be kept in the loop. Get a nametag (first names only), Grab some bites, find a seat.
5:40	10 minutes	Welcome and introduction	– Thank you for coming. – Why we're here and why we've invited you. – Some info about the funds, our overall process. – What has taken place so far. – What will be happening after this evening. – What we will be focusing on this evening is reflecting on some of what we have heard. We would love to hear your feedback. – We also want to thank you for your participation and interest in this important work in our community. We invite you to share honestly, any notes captured this morning will be unattributed.
5:50	10 minutes	Name Round/Check-in	Share what you feel comfortable sharing (name/role(s)). What brought you here this evening?
6:00	10 minutes	Reflecting back	– The Design Team shares content and themes captured from the gatherings this year. – Themes/word clouds, who we met with, and the Design Team's general takeaways so far. – Provide printed copies of the compiled raw data for the participants to review.
6:10	5 minutes	Scan through the material. What do you see?	The intention isn't to read every word. It wouldn't be possible! What jumps out at you as you look through the material? – Provide highlighters and pens for taking notes.

6:15	10 minutes	Discuss in small groups	– What did you hear or do you see? – What reflections do you have? – What resonates/stands out?
6:25	10 minutes	Sharing and capturing of reflections	Capture output on a flip chart.
6:35	5 minutes	Discuss in small groups: What else?	– What more might we add? – What do we want to amplify and/or not miss? – If Falmouth were to do this process again, what might we consider? (Questions to ask, things to do differently?)
6:40	10 minutes	Report Out	1 min of sharing from each group. Capture output.
6:50	5 minutes	Appreciations	Thank you!
6:55	5 minutes	Wrap-up, Next steps	What's happening next?
7:00		End/Clean-up	



TOWN OF FALMOUTH

2024

Opiod Abatement Funding Application Information

The Town of Falmouth, acting through the Human Services Department and Commission on Substance Use, is requesting applications for Opioid Abatement funding from public or private, state and federally recognized nonprofit organizations, agencies, partnerships, or other interested parties to provide services, programs, or initiatives that will mitigate the impacts of the Opioid epidemic on the residents and community of Falmouth.

Introduction & Background:

On July 21, 2021, Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey announced a \$26 billion settlement agreement with opioid distributors and Johnson & Johnson, which will provide more than \$500 million to the Commonwealth and its cities and towns for prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery across Massachusetts. (More information can be found at the Attorney General's website: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/learn-about-the-ags-statewide-opioid-settlements-with-opioid-industry-defendants>)

Under the state's approved State-Subdivision Agreement, 40% of abatement funds coming into the Commonwealth under statewide opioid settlements will be allocated to the state's municipalities. 60% of the abatement funds will be allocated to the Opioid Recovery and Remediation Fund to further be dispensed into the community through Department of Public Health grants. Municipalities that completed the Subdivision Settlement Participation Form and agree to use the payments to abate the opioid crisis in their communities will be receiving a portion of the settlement funds directly in the form of eighteen (18) payments over the next seventeen (17) years.

Municipal abatement funds shall not be used to fund care reimbursed by the state, including through MassHealth and the Bureau of Substance Addiction Services (BSAS), although local or area agencies or programs that provide state-reimbursed services can be supported financially in other ways that help meet the needs of their participants. The settlement funds must be spent on services and initiatives across the continuum of Substance Use Disorder:



Community Engagement Process:

During 2023 the Falmouth Commission on Substance Use hosted a community engagement process to solicit input from residents, service providers, and community stakeholders who have been directly impacted by the opioid crisis. This process included a large, facilitated community conversation, 5 focus groups, and 2 workshops with the Falmouth Commission on Substance Use. The input received through this will be incorporated into funding decisions.

GRANT TIME FRAME AND CONDITIONS FOR RENEWALS AND EXTENSIONS:

The Town of Falmouth will issue one-year grants of up to \$25,000 with an option to renew for up to two additional years. The Town of Falmouth reserves the right to determine if multiyear grants will be issued based on the scope and expected impact of the project and the organization's history of delivering similar projects.

Organizations selected for funding will enter into a contract with the Town of Falmouth to deliver the programs and services outlined in the application. The contractual start date is expected to be August 1, 2024.

The Town of Falmouth, at its sole discretion, may choose to renew a contract for up to two additional years if deliverables and benchmarks are achieved.

SCOPE OF SERVICES:

Public agencies, state and federally recognized non-profit organizations, or other interested parties may submit applications for funding. Funding proposals from collaborative partnerships are encouraged if there is a lead organization who will be responsible for project delivery and reporting requirements. Proposals that are accepted and receive funding must provide programs and services in the following areas:

- ❖ Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) Treatment
- ❖ Harm Reduction services and programs.
- ❖ Support for people in treatment and recovery from opioid and other substance use disorders.
- ❖ Support and resources for families and loved ones impacted by others' OUD.
 - Grief support
 - Support and resources for kinship care (i.e. grandparents raising grandchildren)
- ❖ Connections to care for those seeking support for substance use disorder.
 - Treatment and recovery support navigation
 - Access to and assistance with basic needs in early recovery
 - Recovery Coaching
- ❖ The needs of criminal justice-involved people and their loved ones.
- ❖ Support for pregnant or parenting women and their families, including babies with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome
- ❖ Prevent the misuse of opioids.
- ❖ Substance Use Prevention Education and early intervention programs for children and youth.

For a more detailed outline of approved strategies please visit: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/massachusetts-abatement-terms/download>

A Zoom Drop-In hour will be offered to answer Applicant questions on Wednesday, April 17th at 3 pm. Zoom link:
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87977868746?pwd=F88Pth6UDwdOQJpHjc1lxTaMO8Yvx.C.1>

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:

A mid-year report is due by January 31, 2025. The brief summary should include: Details of the project or services provided to date, the number and demographics of Falmouth residents served to date (age, race, ethnicity), barriers encountered, and any adjustments made as a result. Lastly, include any plans for sustaining the project/program or service if renewal funds are available.

A year-end or project close report is due no later than June 30, 2025. The summary report should include the project details and services provided throughout the year, the number and demographics of Falmouth residents served, how you have engaged minority members of the community and those with lived or living experiences related to substance use disorder, all other deliverables, benchmarks, or outcomes attained, and barriers encountered. Requests for renewal funding can be included in the year-end report and will be considered for up to 2 renewal years.

Upon request of the Falmouth Commission on Substance Use, attendance of an appropriate designee of your organization at a Commission Meeting will be required.



Town of Falmouth OPIOID FUNDING APPLICATION

Check the category for which funding is requested:

- ☐ Prevention/Education
- ☐ Harm Reduction
- ☐ Treatment
- ☐ Recovery

Funding Request Summary:

Project/Program Name: _____

- ☐ Existing project
- ☐ New project

Amount Requested: _____

(Minimum of \$1,000 and up to \$25,000. Less than \$1,000 refer to small grant application)

Total Project Budget: _____

Narrative (attach 3-5 pages):

1.) Project/Program Description (All projects must serve the Falmouth community):

Please provide a complete description of your project and include the following:

- Describe all aspects of the project/program.
- Describe your organization and its capacity to deliver this project/program and any history in successfully delivering similar projects.
- Describe the need that your project addresses, including any data you have that supports the need, and how it addresses opioid-related impacts to the Falmouth community and residents.
- Describe who this project will benefit and how many people you anticipate will be served by this project.
- Describe the project timeline for planning and implementation. Include a start/end time if applicable.
- Provide an organization chart and list of Board of Directors

2.) Goals of Project:

- Describe the goals and objectives of the project and the strategies you will use to meet those goals and objectives. Include any evidence-based or evidence-informed strategies that will be utilized.

3.) Impact, Outcomes and Evaluation:

- Please describe the anticipated impact of your project for Falmouth residents, or the Falmouth community at large, and how it mitigates the impacts of the opioid crisis.
- Describe how you will evaluate and measure the impact and outcomes of your project.

4.) Collaboration:

Does your project involve collaboration with another organization or entity? For example, a community organization, healthcare organization, school, peer non-profit, faith-based organization, town department, etc.?

- If yes, please describe this collaboration and the roles of each collaborator. Please attach all Memorandums of Understanding.

5.) Sustainability:

- Is this a short-term or long-term project? Describe how you might plan to sustain, or enhance, this project/program in years 2 and 3 if renewal funds are available.
- Include any other pending, secured, or prospective funding sources for this project and describe the vision for long-term funding and sustainability.

6.) Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging:

The Town of Falmouth is interested in strengthening our community's diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging efforts. How does your proposal support these values?

Financials/Budget:

Submit the Budget Worksheet (see Appendix B)

Submit the Budget Narrative (see Appendix C) to include descriptions of expenses and income for this project sufficient to meet the goals of the project.

Is this project using a fiscal sponsor? (*A fiscal sponsor is a nonprofit that provides fiduciary oversight, financial management, and other administrative services to build the capacity of charitable initiatives. In a fiscal sponsorship, a sponsor organization accepts donations and grants on behalf of another group.*)

If yes, please include:

- Fiscal Sponsor Name
- Fiscal Sponsor Acknowledgement – Include a letter signed by the head of the organization acting as fiscal sponsor accepting responsibility for any funds received.

Submission Deadline:

Application is due by **May 31, 2024**, at 4:00 pm at Falmouth Human Services Office: 744 Main Street Falmouth, MA 02540. Or via email at opioidabatement@falmouthma.gov.

Completed Application Checklist:

To ensure that your proposal receives all due consideration, please be sure to include all requested information and supplementary materials. Incomplete applications or missing supplementary materials may cause your application to be removed from consideration for funding.

- ☐ Completed Cover Sheet on agency letterhead (Appendix A)
- ☐ Completed Program Narrative
- ☐ Completed Budget and Budget Narrative sheets (Appendix B & C)
- ☐ State Taxes Certificate Clause (Appendix D)
- ☐ Completed Signature Page on agency letterhead (Appendix E)
- ☐ Organizational chart and list of Board of Directors (if applicable)
- ☐ Attachments – MOUs, any letters of support (not required)

Town of Falmouth - APPENDIX A:

On Agency Letterhead

COVER SHEET

❖ **Organization/ Partnership Name:**

- Address:
- City, State, Zip:
- Phone:
- Fax:

❖ **Lead Administrator (Responsible for contract and reports):**

- Organization:
- Name/Title:
- Phone:
- Fax:
- E-mail:

❖ **Financial Administrator (Responsible for invoices):**

- Name/Title
- Phone:
- Fax:
- E-mail:

❖ **Federal Tax ID Number:**

- Attach a copy of your tax-exempt certificate

Town of Falmouth

APPENDIX B:

BUDGET WORKSHEET

Name of Organization or Collaborative: _____

Name of Project: _____

TOTAL AMOUNT NEEDED FOR PROGRAM: \$ _____

TOTAL AMOUNT REQUESTED FROM TOWN OF FALMOUTH: \$ _____

Are you seeking additional funding, and/or do you currently have other financial support for this program? Yes ☐ No ☐

Will your organization/partner agencies contribute financial support for this program? Yes ☐ No ☐

Organizations should include all prospective, pending or secured sources of funding in the table below and in the narrative.

Instructions:

- Capital expenses must be limited and shown to be necessary to the development and delivery of programs and services.
- Include the financial contributions that the applicant's organization(s) will allocate to the proposed project in column (D) in the detailed expense category. If the program is entirely dependent on outside funding, please leave column (D) blank.

DETAILED EXPENSE CATEGORIES	(A) TOTAL PROGRAM EXPENSE	(B) TOWN OF FALMOUTH REQUEST	(C) REQUESTED/ RECEIVED FROM OTHER SOURCES	(D) OWN ORGANIZATION/ COLLABORATIVE CONTRIBUTION
Personnel Expenses:	\$	\$	\$	\$
Consultants/Contract Services:	\$	\$	\$	\$
Equipment/Supplies:	\$	\$	\$	\$
Travel:	\$	\$	\$	\$
Administrative/Overhead Expenses:	\$	\$	\$	\$
Total Expenses:	\$	\$	\$	\$

Town of Falmouth APPENDIX C:

BUDGET NARRATIVE

Please provide a narrative to include details and justification for expenditures as well as details of project income sufficient to meet the goals of the project.

Town of Falmouth APPENDIX D:

On Agency Letterhead

STATE TAXES CERTIFICATE CLAUSE

I, certify under the penalties of perjury that I, to my best knowledge and belief, have filed all State (Commonwealth of Massachusetts) tax returns and paid all State (Commonwealth of Massachusetts) taxes under law.

By: _____

*Signature of Individual or Corporate Name

Town of Falmouth
APPENDIX E:

On Agency Letterhead

SIGNATURE PAGE

I/we hereby certify that this proposal is submitted in good faith and the information contained herein is true and accurate to the best of my ability.

Signature

Date

Print Name and Title (Lead Administrator)

Town of Falmouth Review of Applications/Selection of Applications for Funding

Applications will be reviewed and rated by a five-member screening committee led by the Human Services Director and will include 2 members of the Human Services Committee and 2 members of the Commission on Substance Use. Based on the review and recommendations of the screening committee, applications will be selected to move on to the next round of review with the Full Commission on Substance Use in an open public meeting of the Commission. The Commission will make recommendations for funding to the Human Services Director and put them forth to the Town Manager for final approval. The following evaluation criteria and scoring system will be used:

<i>Evaluation Criteria</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Points</i>
Organization and Project Description	The application provides a clear and full description of the organization and project/program. Each component of the project/program is clearly defined. The application provides relevant and supporting data that documents the opioid-related impacts and needs in Falmouth and how the project will benefit the Falmouth community and residents.	20
Capacity	The Organization, and other partnering organizations, demonstrate clear capacity and staffing to deliver the proposed project/program. The application shows a commitment to and capability of delivering a quality program that will positively impact the community.	20
Goals and Strategies	The application provides clearly defined goals for the project/program and includes strategies to achieve and meet those goals. Evidence-based or evidence-informed strategies are utilized.	15
Outcomes and Evaluation	The broadly anticipated impact of the project for Falmouth residents, or the Falmouth community at large, and how it mitigates the impacts of the opioid crisis is described. A plan is offered for evaluating and measuring the impact and outcomes of the project.	15
Community Collaborations	Community collaborations and roles are evident and clearly defined. MOU's are included in the application. Strong community partnerships are evident.	10
Future Sustainability	The application offers a plan for future growth and sustainability and describes future additional funding plans.	10
Budget	The requested funds are reasonable, cost-effective, and clearly connected to the project objectives. Matching funds or in-kind services are being used to support the project/program	20
Diversity Equity Inclusion and Belonging	The application demonstrates a commitment to incorporating the perspectives of the population served in the program design and delivery. The application demonstrates a commitment to serving underserved and marginalized members of the community.	10