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AB 1779
Recovery Residences – Best Practices
Fact Sheet

Summary: This legislation will require the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to adopt best practices for operating recovery housing, including suggested minimum standards for operating recovery housing.

Problem: Despite the growing death toll from opioid and alcohol abuse and addiction, California lacks a uniform set of standards to guide individuals and their loved ones in identifying safe, reliable housing accommodations that will be conducive to continuing recovery.

Solution: AB 1779 will establish evidence-based standards for recovery housing by requiring DHCS to adopt the “Best Practices for Operating Recovery Housing (BPORH)” that are being developed by United States Department of Health and Human Services. Until the “Best Practices” are distributed, the department will be required to adopt the most recent standards approved by the National Alliance for Recovery Residences (NARR) as the minimum standards necessary for the owners or operators of recovery housing to receive state funding.

Background: According to the federal Centers for Disease Control (CDC), an estimated 88,000 Americans die from alcohol-related causes annually, making alcohol the third leading preventable cause of death in the U.S. (behind tobacco and poor diet/physical inactivity). Excessive alcohol use is estimated to shorten the lives of those who die because of it by an average of 30 years

The CDC also estimated that more than 72,000 Americans died from drug overdoses in 2017, including illicit drugs and prescription opioids – a two-fold increase in a decade. About two-thirds involved opioids.

The CDC further estimates that more than 5,000 Californians died from overdoses in 2017, an increase of more than 5% above the previous year, due partially to a rise in the use of fentanyl. Fentanyl was developed as a synthetic opioid for treating severe pain, such as in advanced stages of cancer, and the CDC says it’s at least 50 times more potent than morphine.

Residential treatment facilities that provide non-medical care, programs and services to chemically dependent adults are licensed and regulated by DHCS.

However, recovery residences, also known as sober living homes, are not. In addition, the vast majority of recovery residences are not bound to any standards for promoting recovery, including providing safe living environments for residents and neighbors alike.

Currently, Californians have no authoritative source of information for locating standards-compliant recovery housing. AB 1779 will enable California to provide accurate and up-to-date information that will protect individuals and families seeking recovery housing.

By adopting best practices including minimum standards for recovery residences, California will take a significant step towards increasing the number of safe recovery residences for



individuals seeking to continue their recovery and reintegrating back into society.

Support:

California Consortium of Addiction Programs and Professionals (Sponsor)
Association of California Cities – Orange County
Anaheim Lighthouse
Bridges Professional Treatment Services
Central Valley Recovery Services, Inc.
City of Anaheim
City of Garden Grove
Community Recovery Resources
Community Social Model Advocates, Inc.
National Alliance for Recovery Residences
Northbound Treatment Services
Orange County Recovery Collaboration
Sacramento Recovery House, Inc.
Soroptimist House of Hope, Inc.
Stephen J. Russell & Associates
The Broadway Treatment Center
The Camp Recovery Center
The Villa Center, Inc.
Valley Sober Living
Windstone Addiction Centers, Inc.

Opposition:

Advocates for Responsible Treatment
Disability Rights California

For More Information:

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