

# FORD COUNTY ROSC STRATEGIC PLAN

Fiscal Year  
2026 - 2028+

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## **Ford County ROSC Needs Assessment**

Ford County, Illinois is comprised of several communities that collectively shape the county's rural character and economic foundation. Gibson City, the largest municipality, is recognized for its strong agricultural base and active community events. Paxton, the county seat, serves as the hub for government services and historical landmarks. Additional towns and villages—including Roberts, Melvin, Piper City, Sibley, Elliott, Kempton, and Cabery—are characterized by deep agricultural roots and close-knit populations. Together, these communities offer a blend of residential living, local commerce, and farming that defines Ford County's identity.

According to U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts, Ford County has an estimated population of approximately 13,250 residents. The county is home to 876 veterans, and about 3% of the population is foreign-born. The age distribution reflects a balanced demographic profile, with approximately 6% of residents under the age of five, 23% under age 18, and 20% aged 65 or older. The gender composition is evenly split, with women representing 50% of the population. Racially, the county is predominantly Caucasian (98%), with African American/Black and Pacific Islander residents collectively accounting for approximately 2% of the population. The economic and educational profile of Ford County indicates a stable workforce and moderate-income levels. Approximately 61% of residents aged 16 and older participate in the civilian labor force, with women comprising 56% of that workforce. The median household income is \$60,782, and the per capita income is \$32,674. Approximately 11% of residents live below the federal poverty level. Educational attainment is relatively strong, with 92% of adults aged 25 and older holding at least a high school diploma, and 19% having earned a bachelor's degree or higher.

## **Substance Use Impact**

Despite its relatively small population, Ford County has experienced measurable impacts related to substance use. According to the Ford County Coroner, there were between 8 and 10 overdose-related deaths from 2020 through 2024. Notably, data from 2024 indicate zero overdose deaths. As of the date of this publication, the Ford County Coroner has reported three overdose-related deaths in 2025. While overall overdose numbers remain comparatively low, statewide increases in opioid-related fatalities highlight the continued need for proactive prevention efforts, accessible treatment options, and harm-reduction strategies within the county.

## **Ford County ROSC FY26 Community Survey**

The Ford County Recovery-Oriented System of Care (ROSC) FY26 Community Survey was developed to assess public perceptions related to recovery, substance use, and service availability, and to identify areas for improvement within the county. The survey was open to the public from September 1 through December 1, 2025, and consisted of 17 questions in addition to demographic items. Surveys were available in both paper and online formats. In

collaboration with ROSC council members and community partners, the survey was widely distributed throughout Ford County. A total of 168 responses were received.

Survey respondents represented all age groups, with the smallest proportion under age 18 (2.27%) and the largest concentration between ages 35 and 44 (25%). Of the respondents, 71.21% identified as female, 25.76% as male, 0.76% as nonbinary, and 2.27% preferred not to self-identify; no respondents identified as gender fluid. Many participants identified as non-Hispanic (99.24%), while 0.76% identified as Hispanic or Latino. In terms of race, 95.45% identified as Caucasian/White, 1.52% as African American/Black, and 3.03% as two or more races, with no respondents identifying as Native American, Asian, or Pacific Islander.

### **Key Survey Findings**

The survey results provide valuable insights into community attitudes and perceptions related to stigma and access to services in Ford County. Most respondents (83.93%) agreed there is stigma in Ford County about people who have a substance use disorder. When asked if people with a SUD are weak or lack self-control, 11.68% agreed. Although this is the minority, this highlights the need for continuing education. Overall, respondents reported a high level of respect for individuals with mental illness, with 93% agreeing and strongly agreeing. In comparison, respect for individuals who use drugs was notably lower, with only 74.04% agreeing and strongly agreeing, indicating a continued disparity in perceptions.

Regarding Medical Assisted Recovery (MAR), 57.15% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that MAR is an effective approach for substance use disorders. However, a substantial proportion of respondents (36.02%) neither agreed nor disagreed, suggesting uncertainty or limited familiarity with MAR. Additionally, 29.75% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that it is difficult to find healthcare providers who offer MAR. Notably, only 12.03% of respondents reported knowing where to access MAR services, highlighting a significant gap in awareness. Perceptions of harm-reduction strategies, including Narcan® distribution and syringe service programs, were mixed. Approximately 26.67% of respondents indicated neutral views on whether harm-reduction services reduce risk, while 29.34% disagreed or strongly disagreed. Awareness of local harm-reduction service availability was also limited, with 40.14% selecting neutral, 21.09% agreeing, and only 6.12% strongly agreeing that these services are accessible.

Lastly, 29.5% of respondents reported that they do not know how to administer the lifesaving drug Narcan®. Together, these findings highlight opportunities for expanded community education, improved service visibility, and increased awareness of harm-reduction resources. Support for increased government funding for mental health and substance use treatment was strong, with 81.25% of respondents in agreement. However, confidence in the accessibility of services was considerably lower. Only 31.65% of respondents expressed confidence that substance use treatment is accessible regardless of barriers such as income, insurance status, language, disability, identity, or citizenship. Similarly, 34.29% expressed confidence in the

accessibility of mental health services. Furthermore, 35% of respondents reported having trouble accessing mental health and substance use services. Collectively, these findings underscore ongoing challenges related to stigma, service accessibility, and awareness, and point to the need for continued efforts to strengthen and expand behavioral health resources in Ford County.

**Ford County ROSC Communication and Outreach Plan**

**Purpose**

This plan outlines how Ford County ROSC communicates with stakeholders, people with lived experience, families, providers, and the broader community. The goal is to strengthen recovery supports, reduce stigma, increase access to Medication Assisted Recovery (MAR) and harm reduction resources, and advance the Ford County ROSC Strategic Plan.

**Objectives – The Ford ROSC Communication & Outreach Plan is designed to achieve the following:**

1. Strengthen and diversify ROSC Council membership, with intentional inclusion of Persons and Families with Lived Experience (PLE/FLE).
2. Ensure consistent, clear communication of ROSC initiatives, resources, and opportunities.
3. Promote recovery-oriented, evidence-based language and reduce stigma related to substance use disorder and mental health.
4. Support implementation of strategic priorities related to MAR expansion, harm reduction access, and the Reframing Recovery campaign.
5. Expand and strengthen partnerships with healthcare and public health systems, law enforcement, faith-based organizations, businesses, and community sectors to increase access to MAR and harm reduction services.

**Key Messages** - Ford County ROSC communicates several core messages throughout its outreach efforts. Recovery is possible and is strengthened through access to evidence-based supports, including Medication Assisted Recovery and harm reduction. Ford County ROSC is a collaborative, inclusive, and community-driven effort that values lived experience and cross-sector partnerships. Reducing stigma is essential to improving access to care, encouraging help-seeking, and strengthening the overall health and safety of the community.

**Target Audiences** - The following groups represent the key audiences Ford ROSC seeks to inform, engage, and collaborate with in support of the coalition’s work:

| <b>Community Sector</b>                  | <b>Purpose</b>   | <b>Resources to Share</b>   | <b>Method(s) of Distribution</b>  |
|--|--|---|---|
| ROSC Council Members & Distribution List | Engage and inform members and partners of ROSC activities and planning | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Council Agendas &amp; Minutes</li> <li>2. Initiatives</li> <li>3. Events</li> <li>4. Strategic Plan Updates</li> <li>5. Resource Lists</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Email</li> <li>2. Zoom Meetings</li> <li>3. Ford ROSC Virtual Resource Guide (JotForm)</li> </ol> |

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|---|--|--|--|
| People and Families with Lived Expertise                                  | Increase access to and awareness of recovery supports, MAR, and harm reduction; engage in ROSC leadership and activities | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. MAR Education</li> <li>2. Harm Reduction Resources</li> <li>3. Community Resource Lists</li> <li>4. Reframing Recovery Materials</li> <li>5. Event Flyers</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In-person Outreach</li> <li>2. Community Events</li> <li>3. Email</li> <li>4. Social Media</li> <li>5. Jail Resource Bags/Cell Tablets</li> <li>6. Ford ROSC Virtual Resource Guide (JotForm)</li> </ol> |
| Healthcare & Public Health Systems (SUD, MH, primary care, public health) | Expand access to harm reduction and MAR by increasing options and engaging more providers                                | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. MAR Education</li> <li>2. Harm Reduction Education</li> <li>3. Resource Maps</li> <li>4. Training Opportunities</li> </ol>   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Email</li> <li>2. Direct Outreach</li> <li>3. Meetings</li> <li>4. Ford ROSC Virtual Resource Guide (JotForm)</li> </ol>   |
| Law Enforcement, Jail Staff, Courts & Justice Partners                    | Support jail-based MAR initiatives and harm reduction access; strengthen collaboration                                   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mar Materials</li> <li>2. Harm Reduction Resources</li> <li>3. Referral Pathways</li> <li>4. ROSC Updates</li> </ol>   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Email</li> <li>2. Virtual Resource App</li> <li>3. Direct Outreach</li> <li>4. Community Outreach Events</li> <li>5. HMA/Jail Staff Meetings</li> </ol>  |
| Faith-Based Organizations   | Reduce stigma and strengthen access to recovery and harm reduction supports  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reframing Recovery materials</li> <li>2. MAR and Harm Reduction Education</li> <li>3. Resource Lists</li> <li>4. Event Flyers</li> </ol>                             | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Direct Outreach</li> <li>2. Distribution of Materials</li> <li>3. Ford ROSC Virtual Resource Guide (JotForm)</li> </ol>  |
| Media Outlets   | To engage and inform of ROSC initiatives and activities; support stigma reduction  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Event announcements</li> <li>2. ROSC And Reframing Recovery Materials</li> <li>3. Public Education Messaging</li> </ol>  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Press Releases</li> <li>2. Radio</li> <li>3. Newspaper</li> <li>4. Digital Media</li> </ol>  |
| General Community Members   | Increase access to and awareness of recovery resources and improve community   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Educational resources on harm Reduction, MAR And Stigma</li> <li>2. Community Resource Lists</li> </ol>  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Community Events</li> <li>2. Social Media</li> <li>3. Local Media</li> </ol>   |

|  |                                   |  |                       |
|--|-----------------------------------|--|-----------------------|
|  | understanding of SUD and recovery | 3. ROSC Activities/Events<br>Flyers<br>4. ROSC Promotional Materials | 4. Outreach Materials |
|--|-----------------------------------|--|-----------------------|

**Communication Channels, Frequency, and Responsibilities** – Ford ROSC will use the following channels to consistently communicate the work and activities of the ROSC coalition to stakeholders and community members:

| <b>Channels</b>  | <b>Frequency</b>  | <b>Person Assigned</b>                                |
|--|---|---|
| Monthly Council Meetings                                 | Monthly   | Ford ROSC Staff                                       |
| Facebook and Instagram Social Media Posting              | Weekly (4-6 times per week); paid/boosted posts as needed (approx. 2-4 times per fiscal year)   | Ford ROSC Staff and Chestnut Health Systems Interns   |
| Email – Council Updates                                  | Council meeting agendas/reminders will be sent 7 days before meeting and day of the meeting; Council meeting minutes will be sent 7 days after the meeting. | Ford ROSC Staff                                       |
| Email – Agenda Updates & Resource Sharing                | As Needed/Requested   | Ford ROSC Staff                                       |
| Jotform Virtual Resource Guide/Resource Cards            | Will update monthly/as needed; Will promote and/or distribute at each monthly council meeting, outreach events, etc.  | Ford ROSC Staff                                       |
| Outreach materials (flyers, brochures, one pagers, etc.) | Will update monthly/as needed; Will promote and distribute at each outreach event   | Ford ROSC Staff, RESET Team Subcommittee Members      |
| Community Outreach Events (direct outreach)              | As identified/requested; quarterly at minimum   | ROSC Staff & Council/ RESET Team Subcommittee Members |
| Ford ROSC Strategic Plan Reviews                         | Quarterly at Monthly Council Meetings   | Ford ROSC Staff                                       |

**Evaluation and feedback** – Ford County ROSC will evaluate outreach and communication effectiveness through multiple measures, including ROSC Council attendance and member diversity; number of partnerships and collaborative activities; participation in outreach events and trainings; social media reach and engagement; and utilization of the virtual resource guide. Ongoing feedback from council members, partners, and people with lived experience will be used to refine communication strategies and improve outreach effectiveness.

## FY26 Ford County ROSC – Council Goals, Objectives, and Outcome Measures

**Goal #1 (Year 1 – Short-Term Progress):** By June 2026, Ford ROSC will expand one new initiative aimed at increasing awareness of and accessibility to Medication Assisted Recovery (MAR) services.

### **Objectives for Year 1:**

- Expand MAR awareness and accessibility for individuals in the Ford County Jail by providing 50 resource bags and newly created in-cell MAR materials containing information on local MAR services, general MAR education, and MAR Now resources by March 2026.
- Work with the RESET Team to identify content and approve all updated MAR materials by January 2026.
- Assemble 50 resource bags with support from the RESET Team by February 2026.
- Deliver 50 resource bags to the jail by February 2026.
- Meet monthly with the Jail and HMA to review MAR initiatives, discuss needs and feedback, and document relevant observations—ongoing throughout FY26.
- Adjust MAR materials (if needed) by June 2026.
- Review resource bag distribution with Ford County Jail staff in December 2025 and June 2026 to confirm stock and ensure MAR materials remain available to individuals in the jail.

### **Progress Achieved:**

- Initiative launched; planning underway.
- Contact with the Ford County Jail and HMA was reestablished, with three meetings held as of December. During these meetings, the team reviewed MAR services currently offered in the jail, gathered feedback on past resource bags, discussed needs for future MAR resources, including a request from the Jail to make MAR resources available on cell tablets.
- Jail expressed interest in having MAR resources available on cell tablets.
- Identified available MAR resources for 50 resource bags, including MAR Now, GROW (the local MAR provider in Ford County), and the finalized Ford County ROSC resource map; educational materials are still in development.

### **Next Steps:**

- Assess Year 1 progress, including distribution of MAR resource bags, in-cell materials, and engagement with current providers and partners.
- Use Year 1 feedback to refine MAR resource bag contents and in-cell materials for future distributions.
- Identify additional community partners, sectors, or MAR providers to expand awareness and accessibility initiatives in Year 2. Plan for the next round of resource bag distributions and any new methods of delivering MAR information (e.g., digital resources on cell tablets).
- Continue monitoring MAR resource use in the jail and adjust strategies as needed based on ongoing feedback.

**Outcome/ Output Measures:**

- Number of meetings and/or communications with HMA and Ford County Jail.
- Number of MAR materials approved
- Number of resource bags assembled & delivered
- Number of bags distributed monthly
- Conducted and documented resource bag distribution reviews with Ford County Jail staff by June 2026.

**Goal #1 (3 Year Goal – Long-Term Direction): By June 30, 2028, implement three distinct initiatives that increase community awareness of and access to MAR services.**

**Objectives:**

- Utilize the annual Ford County community survey to assess understanding of Medication Assisted Recovery (MAR), perceptions of MAR, and knowledge of where to access MAR services (yearly, ongoing).
- Establish one new MAR initiative each year (FY26, FY27, FY28).
- Identify key community partners and collaborate with them to secure at least one additional MAR provider in Ford County by June 30, 2027.
- Identify, engage, and strengthen relationships with at least five community partners, including MAR providers, law enforcement, healthcare providers, faith-based organizations, and social service agencies, to support planning, implementation, and expansion of MAR awareness and accessibility initiatives throughout FY26–FY28.
- Update MAR resources annually to ensure accurate and accessible information (yearly, ongoing).
- Evaluate initiatives annually and use the findings to guide improvements (yearly, ongoing).

**Outcome Measures:**

- Number of MAR initiatives implemented
- Completed annual community survey.
- Number of additional MAR providers identified in Ford County
- Did we review and update MAR materials as needed each year
- Did we review initiatives annually to identify opportunities for improvement

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**Goal #2 (Year 1 – Short-Term Progress): By June 2026, Ford ROSC will increase access to and awareness of harm reduction resources across Ford County through collaborative partnerships, using three separate distribution channels to reach justice-impacted, community, and sector-specific audiences.**

**Objectives for Year 1:**

- Work with the Ford County Public Health Department to identify locations and install 3 NARCAN® boxes and 1 harm reduction vending machine throughout Ford County by June 30, 2026.

- Assist the Public Health Department with outreach, promotion, and advocating for identified locations to host NARCAN® boxes through June 2026.
- Promote community NARCAN® boxes and the vending machine through outreach, media, and partner communications through June 2026.
- Include NARCAN®, fentanyl test strips, and educational materials in jail resource bags for justice-impacted individuals by February 2026.
- Provide digital PDF materials on harm reduction and resource access for jail cell tablets by January 2026.
- Assemble additional Reframing Recovery boxes with NARCAN®, educational materials, and other harm reduction tools for local agencies and businesses by June 2026.
- Promote harm reduction strategies, their effectiveness, and where to access resources through social media, community events, and local media channels through June 2026.

**Progress Achieved:**

- Partnered with the State’s Attorney and Public Health Department to support opioid settlement fund use for community NARCAN® boxes.
- Helped secure the first public NARCAN® box in Gibson City.
- Co-hosted a NARCAN® training for 13 community members.
- Distributed 50 NARCAN® and harm reduction kits to local businesses and agencies.

**Next Steps:**

- Review Year 1 progress to identify lessons learned and areas for improvement.
- Schedule a planning meeting with the Public Health Department to identify next community locations for NARCAN® boxes and vending machine placement.
- Continue equipping additional agencies, organizations, and businesses with harm reduction supplies.
- Identify additional sectors to target for the next Reframing Recovery box launch.
- Coordinate with the jail to update and distribute resource bags containing Narcan®, test strips, and educational materials as needed.

**Outcome/ Output Measures:**

- Number of harm reduction kits and resources assembled and distributed (Reframing Recovery boxes, jail resource bags, and educational materials).
- Number of NARCAN® trainings hosted and individuals trained.
- Number of community NARCAN® boxes installed and locations secured.
- Number of planning, advocacy, and coordination activities with the State’s Attorney and Public Health Department.
- Number of outreach and awareness efforts conducted (social media campaigns and jail tablet materials).

**Goal #2 (3 Year Goal – Long-Term Direction):** By June 30, 2028, Ford ROSC will expand harm-reduction access by identifying, securing, and sustaining at least 8 new community locations where residents can obtain Narcan, working in partnership with local agencies and organizations.

**Objectives:**

- Utilize the annual Ford County community survey to assess understanding of harm reduction, perceptions of risk reduction, and knowledge of where to access harm-reduction resources (yearly, ongoing).
- Identify and map key community sectors (law enforcement, faith-based organizations, schools, treatment providers, and local businesses) to engage in harm reduction awareness and access efforts by December 2026.
- Conduct outreach to at least 1–2 sectors per quarter to ensure they are aware of harm reduction resources and supports, reaching all targeted sectors (yearly, ongoing)
- Provide partner sectors with clear information on where to access NARCAN® through community boxes and harm reduction vending machines by distributing maps, directories, and resource guides (yearly, ongoing)
- Provide partner sectors with guidance on where to access harm reduction trainings by sharing schedules, contacts, and digital resources from the Ford County Public Health Department (yearly, ongoing).
- Identify and secure at least 8 agencies/locations where residents can access NARCAN® by June 2028.
- Share evidence-based information on harm reduction through social media, flyers, events, and the Reframing Recovery campaign to increase understanding of harm reduction and inform the community where to access resources (yearly, ongoing)
- Host/attend quarterly community events each year (workshops, webinars, or local events) to increase understanding of harm reduction practices and overdose prevention (yearly, ongoing)

**Outcome Measures:**

- Year-over-year increase in community sectors and locations with NARCAN® and harm reduction access points.
- Increased community awareness of where to access NARCAN® and harm reduction resources, as measured by the annual survey.
- Increased number of cross-sector partnerships and coordinated referral pathways.
- Sustained or expanded placement of NARCAN® boxes and harm reduction vending machines.
- Annual harm reduction outreach, training, and resource distribution across community and jail settings.
- Annual community survey was completed and used to guide improvements.

**Goal #3 (Year 1 – Short-Term Progress): By June 2026, reach at least 2 new community sectors with the Ford ROSC Reframing Recovery (RR) Campaign by distributing RR boxes and educational materials to increase awareness and decrease stigma of substance use disorder and mental health.**

**Objectives for Year 1:**

- Finalize distribution plan, recipient list, and educational materials for the next Reframing Recovery campaign by March 30, 2026.
- Hold campaign planning meetings at least twice a month through June 30, 2026.

- Launch and promote Reframing Recovery materials through social media, local media, and community events by March 30, 2026.
- Assemble and distribute the next round of Reframing Recovery Boxes to first responders and faith-based organizations by June 30, 2026.
- Record the second Reframing Recovery video highlighting box recipients by June 30, 2026.
- Plan, host, and promote at least one MAR training by June 30, 2026.
- Identify at least one training for each of the three remaining Reframing Recovery topics by June 30, 2026, including the target audience for each.

**Progress Achieved:**

- Assembled and distributed 50 Reframing Recovery Boxes with stigma-reduction and harm reduction materials in September 2025.
- Recorded and promoted the first Reframing Recovery video and launched a virtual pledge wall for community engagement.
- Planned the next round of box distribution for first responders and faith-based organizations, identifying key themes including MAR, harm reduction, recovery housing, and SUD as a health condition.
- Established a messaging timeline aligning MAR and harm reduction content with current fiscal year goals, with other themes slated for next year.

**Next Steps:**

- Review Reframing Recovery activities and engagement results to guide Year 2 planning.
- Identify the community sectors for the next Reframing Recovery Box distribution in Year 2.
- Continued development of Reframing Recovery materials.
- Develop a plan for ongoing social media, local media, and community event promotion to maintain and expand campaign reach across Ford County.
- Strengthen partnerships to improve community reach, engagement, and support of Reframing Recovery Campaign.

**Outcome/ Output Measures:**

- Reframing Recovery Boxes distributed (Q1, Q4)
- Reframing Recovery videos recorded and promoted (Sept 2025, June 2026)
- Virtual pledge wall launched; 50 pledges achieved by June 2026
- Second-round recipients finalized by Feb 2026
- Next round of materials planned and finalized by Feb 2026
- Campaign messaging posted via social/local media and events (ongoing FY26)
- Campaign planning meetings held twice monthly through June 2026
- Number of trainings identified for FY27 and FY28 planning

**Goal #3 (3 Year Goal – Long-Term Direction): By June 30, 2028, expand the Ford ROSC Reframing Recovery Campaign across Ford County by conducting at least 8 community trainings, distributing 200 Reframing Recovery Boxes, and increasing community engagement by 10% to raise awareness and understanding of substance use disorder (SUD) and mental health.**

**Objectives:**

- Conduct an annual Ford County community survey to evaluate community understanding of SUD, Mental Health, recovery, Medication-Assisted Recovery (MAR), and harm reduction (yearly, ongoing).
- Identify a method to track community engagement through social media, flyer distribution, and event interactions, and use the data to increase engagement by 10% by June 30, 2028.
- Identify and target 2 community sectors for Reframing Recovery Box distribution reaching all community sectors by June 30, 2028.
- Share Reframing Recovery messaging through social media, local media, and community events at least quarterly to promote understanding of SUD and Mental Health issues (ongoing, yearly).
- Identify and implement quarterly (4) community trainings aligned with Reframing Recovery campaign messaging (yearly, ongoing)
- Record and promote 2 Reframing Recovery videos annually featuring community partners and box recipients to reinforce campaign messaging (yearly, ongoing)
- Monitor and evaluate campaign reach, engagement, and community impact annually to inform adjustments, updates, and planning (yearly, ongoing)

**Outcome Measures:**

- Needs assessment results
- Number of community sectors targeted for Reframing Recovery Boxes (min. 2/year)
- Number of Reframing Recovery Boxes distributed annually (min. 100)
- Number of social/local media posts and community events per quarter
- Number of trainings hosted annually
- Number of Reframing Recovery videos recorded/promoted annually (2/year)
- Percent increase in community engagement (target 10%)