

Recovery House Checklists

A Practical
Resource for
Preparing
Recovery Housing
Facilities

Presented by The
Fletcher Group
RCORP-Rural
Center of
Excellence on
SUD Recovery

Introduction

Recovery housing plays a vital role in supporting individuals as they build and maintain long-term recovery from substance use disorders. Creating a safe, comfortable, and recovery-oriented living environment requires thoughtful planning, adequate resources, and attention to both resident needs and operational requirements.

This set of start-up checklists is designed to assist recovery housing operators, community organizations, and project developers in preparing a residence for occupancy by identifying the essential structural components, furnishings, and consumable supplies needed to establish a functional and welcoming home.

By using the checklists provided in this guide, operators can better assess their needs, prioritize purchases, develop realistic budgets, and ensure that residents enter an environment that promotes safety, stability, dignity, and recovery success.

A well-prepared recovery residence promotes safety, stability, dignity, and a sense of community for residents beginning or continuing their recovery journey.

THE CHECKLISTS

- Recovery House Structure
- Recovery House Consumable Supplies
- Recovery House Furnishings

Recovery House Structure Checklist

LICENSING & CERTIFICATION:

- ☐ Licensure from state/local authorities
- ☐ Certification from NARR (National Alliance for Recovery Residences) to meet national quality standards

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT:

- ☐ Create a safe, structured sober living environment
- ☐ Provide inviting shared areas for building building community among residents
- ☐ Consider accessibility needs

FINANCIAL & LEGAL:

- ☐ Insurance coverage (liability, property)
- ☐ Sustainable funding model (resident fees, grants, etc.)
- ☐ Establish accounting and financial management systems
- ☐ Review legal requirements (HIPAA, etc.)
- ☐ Ensure property meets local housing codes and zoning laws

POLICIES & PROCEDURES:

- ☐ Create resident handbook clearly outlining policies
- ☐ Residents rights & grievance process
- ☐ Admission & discharge criteria
- ☐ Medication management

STAFFING & TRAINING:

- ☐ Hire recovery residence administrators and/or house managers
- ☐ Provide training for staff including:
 - ☐ Ethics and resident rights
 - ☐ Recovery principles
 - ☐ Crisis intervention
 - ☐ Trauma-informed care

PROGRAMMING SERVICES:

- ☐ Counseling/Peer Support Groups
- ☐ Life skills training and relapse prevention education
- ☐ Facilitate connections to treatment providers, community resources and employers
- ☐ Encourage involvement in 12-step or other mutual aid groups

COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS:

- ☐ Build relationships with treatment providers for referrals
- ☐ Engage with local recovery community organizations
- ☐ Address any community concerns proactively

EVALUATION & QUALITY IMPROVEMENT:

- ☐ Data collection and outcome monitoring
- ☐ Seek resident feedback through surveys and meetings.

Recovery House Furnishings Checklist

KITCHEN/DINING ROOM:

- ☐ Refrigerator
- ☐ Stove
- ☐ Microwave
- ☐ Dishwasher/Dish Drying Rack
- ☐ Coffee maker
- ☐ Toaster

DISHWARE:

- ☐ Plates
- ☐ Bowls
- ☐ Glasses & Mugs
- ☐ Silverware

COOKWARE:

- ☐ Pots
- ☐ Pans
- ☐ Cookie Sheet
- ☐ Bakeware

UTENSILS:

- ☐ Cooking Spoons
- ☐ Flipping Spatula
- ☐ Baking Spatula
- ☐ Knives
- ☐ Can Opener

OTHER KITCHEN ITEMS:

- ☐ Food Storage Containers
- ☐ Oven Mitts
- ☐ Kitchen Towels & Dishcloths
- ☐ Table & Chairs
- ☐ Bar Stools (if needed)
- ☐ Food Storage Shelving
- ☐ Trash Can (large)

BEDROOMS:

- ☐ Beds & Bed Bug Cups

BEDDING:

- ☐ Pillow
- ☐ Comforter
- ☐ Sheet Set (3 pieces)
- ☐ Blanket
- ☐ Mattress Cover (waterproof)
- ☐ Dresser
- ☐ Nightstand
- ☐ Lamp
- ☐ Window blinds/curtains
- ☐ Clothes Hangers

A well-equipped recovery residence is more than furnished—it is stocked with the everyday household essentials needed to support safe, healthy, and successful community living from the first day of operation.



Recovery House Furnishings, Cont.

BATHROOM:

- ☐ Shower Curtain, Liner, & Bathmat
- ☐ Towel Sets (bath/washcloth/hand towel)
- ☐ Towel Hooks/Rods
- ☐ Toilet Paper Holder
- ☐ Cleaning Tools
- ☐ Rags
- ☐ Toilet Bowl Brush
- ☐ Scrubbers
- ☐ Plunger

LAUNDRY ROOM:

- ☐ Magnets (laundry identification in the machine)
- ☐ Heavy Duty Washer & Dryer
- ☐ Laundry Baskets
- ☐ Iron & Ironing Board

OUTSIDE:

- ☐ Grill
- ☐ Outside Furniture
- ☐ Recreation Equipment (football, volleyball)
- ☐ Designated Smoking Area
- ☐ Ashtrays

CLEANING EQUIPMENT:

- ☐ Mop & Bucket
- ☐ Broom & Dustpan
- ☐ Vacuum

EXTERIOR MAINTENANCE EQUIPMENT:

- ☐ Lawn Mower
- ☐ Edger/Weed Eater
- ☐ Hedge Trimmers
- ☐ Snow Shovel
- ☐ Leaf Rake
- ☐ Trowel (flower planting)

EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT:

- ☐ Fire/Carbon Monoxide Detectors
- ☐ Fire Extinguisher (every floor)
- ☐ First Aid Kit
- ☐ Narcan (every floor)
- ☐ Flashlights & Batteries
- ☐ Lighter/Emergency Candles

TECHNOLOGY:

- ☐ Computer
- ☐ Printer
- ☐ Owl/Webcam

Recovery House Consumable Supplies Checklist

CONSUMABLE SUPPLIES:

- ☐ Coffee
- ☐ Coffee Filters
- ☐ Coffee Sweeteners/Creamer
- ☐ Paper Towels
- ☐ Basic Cooking Spices
- ☐ Dishwasher Detergent
- ☐ Dish Soap
- ☐ Toilet Paper
- ☐ Hand Soap
- ☐ Toiletry Starter Kits (new residents)
- ☐ Multipurpose Surface Cleaner
- ☐ Toilet Bowl Cleaner
- ☐ Floor Cleaner
- ☐ Laundry Detergent
- ☐ Dryer Sheets
- ☐ Laundry Stain Remover
- ☐ Trash Can Liners (large/small)
- ☐ Driveway Salt



Maintaining an adequate inventory of cleaning products, personal hygiene items, paper goods, laundry supplies, and basic household necessities helps ensure a sanitary, functional, and welcoming environment. Regular inventory checks and timely restocking support uninterrupted operations while reinforcing a culture of responsibility, respect, and recovery.

Conclusion

Establishing a recovery residence requires careful planning, thoughtful preparation, and attention to detail. By using the Structure, Furnishings, and Consumables Checklists contained in this guide, operators can create a safe, comfortable, and recovery-oriented environment that supports resident well-being and long-term success.

While every recovery house is unique, ensuring that the physical space is properly equipped and ready for occupancy helps lay the foundation for effective operations, positive resident experiences, and sustainable recovery outcomes. Use this guide as a roadmap throughout the start-up process and revisit it regularly as your residence grows and evolves.



These lists serve as a quick reference for those interested in starting a recovery house.

No list is exhaustive, for personal assistance contact the Fletcher Group.



A recovery residence is much more than a physical structure. Every decision—from ensuring a safe facility to providing comfortable furnishings and essential household supplies—contributes to an environment where residents can focus on recovery, build healthy routines, and develop the skills needed to live independently.