



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**United Way of  
Missoula County**

**United Way of Missoula County & Missoula Substance Use Disorder Connect Introduce Innovative "Recovery Friendly Workplace" Initiative to Foster Supportive Work Environments**

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September is National Recovery Month, and United Way of Missoula County's Missoula Substance Use Disorder Connect is unveiling a groundbreaking **Recovery Friendly Workplace** (RFW) initiative this week, dedicated to creating supportive workplace environments for employees recovering from substance use disorders. The initiative (showcased on the United Way website at [[missoulaunitedway.org/montanas-recovery-friendly-workplace](https://missoulaunitedway.org/montanas-recovery-friendly-workplace)] and offered to employers at no cost) aims to redefine workplace culture by promoting compassion, understanding, and opportunities for growth.

According to Shannan Sproull, Project Director of Missoula Substance Use Disorder Connect, "This initiative, implemented in approximately 25 other states, seeks to bring those in recovery out of the shadows of stigma and view those individuals as a strength to businesses. While this work has begun with logical service-oriented partners such as the Poverello Center, Crosswinds Recovery, Mountain Home Montana, Hope Rescue Mission, Stepping Stones Behavioral Health Services, and Missoula Interfaith Collaborative, we encourage all organizations and businesses to consider this model. Substance use touches many lives – our families, friends, coworkers – and providing support is critical. From a business perspective, it also saves money and time."

The Recovery Friendly Workplace initiative revolves around several core principles:

- 1. Compassionate Support:** Recognizing individuals' challenges in recovery, RFW encourages employers to provide compassionate support through a non-judgmental atmosphere, promoting health and well-being and access to resources.
- 2. Education and Awareness:** RFW offers resources and training to employers and employees alike, fostering awareness about substance use disorders and mental health. The initiative creates a more inclusive and informed workplace by reducing stigma and increasing understanding.
- 3. Proactive Community Partner:** With a focus on growth and empowerment, RFW-designated businesses contribute to a more inclusive and understanding society.

"We are thrilled to launch the Recovery Friendly Workplace initiative as a beacon of hope and progress in our community," said Susan Hay Patrick, CEO of United Way of Missoula County. "Our goal is to transform workplaces into spaces where individuals in recovery feel valued, supported, and empowered to achieve their personal and professional aspirations, and where employers – at no cost – have the resources they need to support their employees' recovery and maintain a healthy and productive workforce."

Businesses and organizations interested in joining the Recovery Friendly Workplace movement can visit the initiative's official page at [[missoulaunitedway.org/montanas-recovery-friendly-workplace](https://missoulaunitedway.org/montanas-recovery-friendly-workplace)] or call Project Director Shannan Sproull at 406-214-4130 to learn more about the benefits, resources, and steps to get involved.

By fostering recovery-friendly environments, United Way of Missoula County aims to improve the lives of individuals in recovery and contribute to a more compassionate and resilient community.

United Way of Missoula County brings people and organizations together to build a better, stronger, healthier community for everyone. Its programs, initiatives and partnerships address the systemic, underlying problems in the areas of education, financial stability, and health that prevent community members from thriving.



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