



**Washington County  
recovery friendly  
workplace network**

December 7, 2023

Sunrise County Economic Council and Community Caring Collaborative are pleased to announce the launch of the Washington County Recovery Friendly Workplace Network.

Developed through a collaborative, responsive, place-based approach supported by the Maine Community Foundation, a local design team of business leaders, human resource professionals, community members in recovery, the Maine Department of Labor, and public health staff created the framework of this newly launched Network.

You may be thinking, *"What is a Recovery Friendly Workplace?"*

A Recovery Friendly Workplace supports a workplace culture that encourages wellness and recovery through connection to resources and services and encourages open communication that supports mutual success.

Recovery Friendly Workplaces are not only good for business, they are also good for the community. Problematic alcohol and substance use do not only impact the individual; employers, family members, and the community also experience the effects. The Washington County Recovery Friendly Workplace Network supports employers so they can support their employees.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, 7 out of 10 people impacted by substance use disorder are already in the workforce. Recovery Friendly Workplaces expand employment opportunities for those in or seeking recovery, foster a safe and supportive environment, and retain healthier, more productive employees. Recovery Friendly Workplaces have several benefits, including reduced absenteeism and turnover rates, increased employee morale and engagement, heightened morale and well-being, stronger community connections, and lower healthcare costs. Employers have historically navigated these needs in an isolated way. That's where the Network can help!

Employers who are part of the Washington County Recovery Friendly Network receive a variety of benefits at no cost. Benefits include one-on-one access to a local RFW advisor, recognition as a recovery-friendly employer, RFW Network Newsletter, networking opportunities with other employers in the Network, training and education opportunities, assistance navigating programs, and connection to resources.

Local partners, such as Healthy Acadia, Aroostook Mental Health Center, and Washington County Community College, provide key resources to the Network including resource connections, training and educational opportunities, peer resources and support, and more!

Recognizing the significant benefits to the workplace and workforce, the State of Maine launched a statewide RFW initiative in 2023. The Washington County Recovery Friendly Workplace Network is an active partner in a coalition of hubs informing and connecting Maine's Recovery Friendly Workplace Program.

For more information and to learn how you can become a member of the Recovery Friendly Workplace Network, visit our website at [www.recoveryfriendlydowneast.org](http://www.recoveryfriendlydowneast.org) or contact Dodie Emerson, Recovery Friendly Workplace Business Advisor at [demerson@sunrisecounty.org](mailto:demerson@sunrisecounty.org) or by phone at 207-271-2132.

