

PARR Q&A for Opening a Recovery Residence (Philadelphia County)





- Is the property zoned appropriately for a “Rooming House” “Boarding House” or Multi-family” through the office of License and Inspections in your county.
- Have a Business Privilege License via L&I (charging rent or “client fees” to live in a recovery residence constitutes a business, therefore, you need a license?



- Most properties are initially zoned for “Single Family Dwelling” this will only allow you, legally, to have four (4) unrelated individuals living in the house.
- Through the zoning process, L&I will determine how many individuals can reside in the “Rooming House.”



- L&I will also inform the owner of the residence of the needed repairs and modifications for the new zoning, i.e. fire alarm system, fire extinguishers clearly displayed on each floor, exit signs, square footage for each resident, # of bathrooms needed for amount of residents, etc.
- Need to clearly display Certificate of Occupancy, Personal Care Home License, and Business Privilege License.



- Has the owner informed the community about the intended use of the house as a “Recovery House” and attempt to build community support ?
- If the majority of the community is not in favor of the recovery residence opening up in their neighborhood, they could possibly block the zoning process via Councilman / Councilwoman, block captains, etc.



- Has there been an “Open House” and/ or invite members of the community in to view the residence and see / hear what your residence will do for the community.
- Do the residents should have certain days when they sweep/ clean and/or shovel snow on block, keep front of Recovery House clean at all times, and do not “hang out” or smoke cigarettes in front of house – use backyard for smoking area.



- Schedule appointment at local Income Maintenance office (DPW) to make them aware of new recovery residence and create working relationship- all residents will be going to this office to apply for benefits (cash, food stamps, medical).
- Has the staff reached out to local drug and alcohol treatment programs, inpatient and outpatient, to make them aware of your Recovery Residence and Services.



- Have representatives of these programs in to view the residence and what you do there so that they may begin to make referrals
- Identify local outpatient programs that your residents will be attending (resident choice)– create working relationship.



- All Recovery Residences should have the following: mission statements, written house rules, admission criteria, supervision requirements, health and safety, living accommodations, residents' grievance policies, drug and alcohol screening policies.
- The main theme in all successful recovery residences is one person in recovery helping another: sharing household responsibilities and meals, caring compassionately about one another, feeling passionately about recovery, learning to get along with others, helping each other in daily lives.