



Recovery Month Celebrations

Ideas for how to acknowledge Recovery Month as a Recovery Friendly Workplace. The next evolution of this Recovery Month packet is to encourage employers to move beyond awareness campaigns toward experiences that foster culture, engagement, and visible leadership. Review ideas shared from previous years, and see new ideas starting on page 9!

ATTEND & LEARN

September 16th, 12PM EST: Share the [registration link](#) with a colleague to join an **orientation session** to learn about National Certification as a Recovery Friendly Workplace.

September 17th, 1PM EST: Save the Date: HRCI Alchemizing HR webinar with featured speaker, Marin Nelson, on **recovery-focused Employee Resource Groups**.

Look through the Operation Understanding local [events calendar](#): Search **events in your area** to attend in person.

Watch a [Dartmouth ECHO session](#): **Learn more** about Recovery Friendly topics like Substance Use Disorder and stigma, hiring people in recovery, return to work agreements, and more.

Read [Journey Magazine Culture Shift series](#): Read part 1 of a 4 part **employer series** that discusses recovery at work. See page 10!

Watch a recorded webinar on the Institute [YouTube Channel](#): Topics include certified RFW employers panel, state RFW programs panel, **Human Resources perspectives** on RFW, and more.

AWARENESS & EDUCATION

Lunch & Learn sessions: Invite **recovery-informed speakers** to a company meeting to share insights (ex - person in recovery, a local treatment provider, a peer support specialist, etc.).

Educational emails/newsletters: Send weekly facts, resources, or employee spotlights **highlighting recovery success** stories (with consent).

Resource table or digital hub: Share flyers, hotlines, Employee Assistance Program (EAP) info, and community resources.

Host a **naloxone awareness & administration training**: Invite a local recovery organization, or make a recorded informational video available for all to view with information on how to access it.

Hold a recovery ally training: Partner with **local recovery organizations** to teach employees how to support colleagues in recovery.

Have a company-wide “book club”: Add a **book on recovery** and resilience to a recommended reading list and host a session or a Slack channel for discussion.

DISPLAY & SHARE

Language matters initiative: **Provide a guide** on person-first, non-stigmatizing language around Substance Use Disorder and recovery.

Purple Day: Choose a day where **staff wear purple** (the color of recovery) to show support.

Give away themed swag: Design and print recovery-related **merch**, like stickers, for people to show off.

Governor's Office proclamation: Inquire with your state's Governor's Office to see if they have made a **proclamation for Recovery Month** and post it for others to see.

Create a mural: Ask everyone to draw something or write something encouraging on a **purple sticky note**, and create an image or mural on a publicly visible wall at your workplace for the month of September.

Fly a **Recovery Month flag** outside of your business.

Display a plant: **Care for a plant** representing growth beyond substance use (bonus if it's purple!)

Pro tip: Keep activities voluntary and inclusive—avoid singling out individuals. The focus should be on education, allyship, and creating a supportive culture.

CHANGE & POST

Use a unique, recovery-centric, **virtual platform background** throughout the month: Change your screensaver, make your Outlook/Google theme purple, etc.

Add a recovery image or resource to your **email signature**: Nationally Certified RFWs can request the file for this premade one.



Post to Socials - Post to social media, use social banners, and tag the official hashtag: **#RecoveryMonth** on corporate or personal pages - [SAMHSA Recovery Month Toolkit](#) has pre-made templates.

Write a **blog post** about recovery: (ex - how Recovery Friendly Workplace practices have impacted you) for your company's website or LinkedIn page and propose they post it.

COMMUNITY & CONNECTION

Connection is considered the opposite of addiction (also known as Substance Use Disorder): Reach out to someone that you haven't spoken to in a while. Say hello, check in, send words of encouragement, etc.

Support a **local restaurant that offers mocktails** on their menu: Order group takeout, get catering for a meeting, etc.

Donate time or resources to a **local organization supporting recovery**. Employers - allow for a volunteer day during the month at a local treatment provider or recovery organization.

Support a business that is Nationally Certified or state designated as Recovery Friendly Workplaces

Company walk or rally: Organize or join a local **recovery walk** to show visible support.

Host a **company potluck with recovery resources** as handouts: Ask your EAP to generate a promotional flyer regarding available services.

WELLNESS & SUPPORT

Appreciation events: Curate a series of small events coordinated by an **RFW culture committee**, if your workplace has one. If they do not, propose the idea of implementing an RFW culture committee at your place of work.

Mindfulness or **stress-management workshops**: Promote healthy coping tools that support overall wellness.

Substance-free social events: Host a **coffee/tea/cheese tasting**, fitness challenge, or family-friendly event that doesn't revolve around alcohol.

Peer support circle: Offer optional, confidential **peer-led groups** during September for those in recovery.

SBIRT assessment: Host an onsite, anonymous assessment through a local provider organization.

RECOGNITION & COMMITMENT

Highlight **workplace policies** that support recovery: (EAP, time off for treatment, flexible schedules, etc.).

Celebrate **recovery champions**: Recognize employees, departments, or leaders who advocate for recovery support.

Company statement or pledge: Publicly affirm your workplace's **commitment to reducing stigma** and supporting recovery.

Use Recovery Month to **announce new initiatives**: ex) expanding peer support, adjusting HR policies, or partnering with new community organizations.

Share with others ways your employer fosters a **Recovery Friendly Workplace environment**: What are the unique pathways they took to obtain certification as an RFW?

End September with a **leadership pledge** to sustain momentum beyond the month.

LEVEL UP



Recovery Passport Challenge: Give every employee a "Recovery Month Passport." Employees earn stamps by participating in activities throughout September (attending a Lunch & Learn, wearing purple, volunteering, completing ally training, reading an article, attending a wellness activity, etc.). Employees who complete their passport are entered into a raffle. This encourages participation without requiring attendance at every event.

Recovery Kindness Chain: Employees anonymously recognize coworkers who demonstrated empathy, support, resilience, or kindness. Every recognition becomes a purple paper link added to a chain displayed in a common area.

Purple Coffee Cart: One morning each week offer free coffee with purple muffins with recovery facts on coffee sleeves.

"Breaking Stigma" Puzzle Wall: A large blank puzzle hangs in a public space. Each employee decorates one puzzle piece answering: "A supportive workplace is one where..." The completed puzzle symbolizes that everyone contributes to workplace wellbeing.

Purple Lights Initiative: Illuminate the building, lobby, reception desk, or office windows purple during Recovery Month.

Employee Art Showcase: Invite employees to submit artwork around themes like hope, resilience, growth, new beginnings, community, etc. Display throughout September.

Pro tip: Keep activities voluntary and inclusive—avoid singling out individuals. The focus should be on education, allyship, and creating a supportive culture.

LEVEL UP

Recovery Tree: Create a large tree in the lobby. On some leaves, post small recovery resource cards. Employees write on blank leaves someone who helped them grow, a healthy habit they've adopted, or something giving them hope.

Executive Story Series: Each executive records a 2-minute video answering: "Why does being a Recovery Friendly Workplace matter to me?" Release one video each week.

Ask Me About Recovery Pins: Executives and managers wear special pins encouraging employees to ask questions about Recovery Friendly Workplace efforts. It demonstrates visible leadership support.

CEO Fireside Chat: An informal discussion between leadership and an outside recovery expert on topics like supporting employees, psychological safety, mental health & substance use recovery, reducing stigma, etc.

Recovery Myth Bingo: Employees receive bingo cards filled with common myths. Throughout the month, educational emails reveal facts that allow employees to mark their cards. Prizes at month's end.

Escape Room Workplace Wellness Edition: Teams solve puzzles involving EAP resources, language matters, naloxone, recovery support, etc.

QR Code Scavenger Hunt: Hide QR codes around the office. Each reveals recovery statistics, local resources, company benefits, videos, recovery stories, etc. Collect all for prizes.

LEVEL UP

Wellness Passport: Employees try different healthy activities that support recovery and wellness throughout September like yoga, meditation, reading, mocktail tasting, etc. Focus is on building healthy routines.

Mocktail Competition: Departments compete to invent the best mocktail, best name, best presentation. Winning recipe becomes the company's signature Recovery Month drink.

Recovery Friendly Shark Tank: Employees pitch ideas that would make the workplace even more Recovery Friendly. Leadership commits funding to implement the winning idea.

30 Ideas in 30 Days: Challenge employees to submit one improvement idea for workplace wellbeing. Vote on favorites. Implement several before next Recovery Month.

Recovery Friendly Awards: Celebrate categories such as Wellness Champion, Inclusive Leader, Community Connector, Hope Builder, Culture Champion. These recognize leadership and supportive behaviors, not recovery status.

Purple Ribbon Wall: Employees voluntarily sign a ribbon pledging to use person-first language, support coworkers, reduce stigma, learn something new about substance use recovery. Display ribbons publicly.

Recovery Fair: Transform the workplace into a wellness expo featuring EAP, recovery organizations, mental health providers, fitness studios, financial wellness, childcare resources, HR benefits, community partners, etc.

RECOVERY MONTH CELEBRATIONS

These are ideas for how you can acknowledge Recovery Month as a Recovery Friendly Workplace, but it is not exhaustive. We gathered ideas with the help of RFW state leaders, employers from across the country, and adapted ideas used to celebrate other initiatives. We would love to hear how you choose to celebrate! Share your ideas for celebration with us and others because when we celebrate recovery out loud, we work toward reducing stigma to ultimately encourage others to get well and stay well. Tag us on LinkedIn and don't forget to use the official hashtag: #RecoveryMonth to inspire other employers nationwide!